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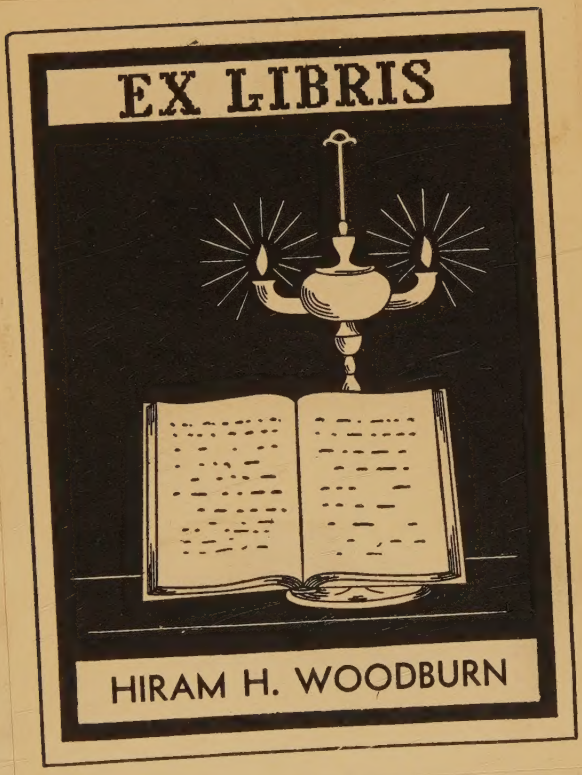

EX LIBRIS
HIRAM H. WOODBURN

A

FULL AND CORRECT ACCOUNT

OF THE CHIEF

NAVAL OCCURRENCES

OF

THE LATE WAR

BETWEEN

GREAT BRITAIN

AND

THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA;

PRECEDED BY

A CURSORY EXAMINATION

OF THE

AMERICAN ACCOUNTS OF THEIR NAVAL ACTIONS FOUGHT PREVIOUS TO THAT PERIOD:

TO WHICH IS ADDED

AN APPENDIX;

WITH PLATES.

By WILLIAM JAMES.

"Truth is always brought to light by time and reflection; while the lie of the day lives by bustle, noise, and precipitation."

MURPHY'S TACITUS, B. ii. 39.

London:

PRINTED FOR T. EGERTON, WHITEHALL.

1817.

Joyce Gold, Printer, 103, Shoe-lane, London.

TO

SIR PHILIP BOWES VERE BROKE,

BARONET, KNIGHT-COMMANDER OF THE MOST HONORABLE ORDER OF THE BATH, AND CAPTAIN IN THE ROYAL NAVY;

WHO,

ON THE FIRST OF JUNE, 1813,

IN

HIS MAJESTY'S FRIGATE SHANNON,

CAPTURED,

AFTER A CLOSE ACTION OF

FIFTEEN MINUTES,

FOUGHT OFF BOSTON LIGHT-HOUSE,

(HIMSELF LEADING THE BOARDERS,)

THE

UNITED STATES FRIGATE CHESAPEAKE,

OF THE SAME FORCE;

THIS WORK

IS

MOST RESPECTFULLY DEDICATED,

BY

THE AUTHOR.

PREFACE.

THE account that an American 44, had captured a British 49, gun frigate, reached the author, when a prisoner in the United States. An Englishman, early accustomed to regard the navy as the bulwark of his country, and not aware of any difference between the nominal or *rated*, and the real force of a ship, might well feel a degree of humiliation in the Guerriere's loss. The event naturally excited a spirit of inquiry; truth and fiction separated by degrees; and, before the author effected his escape from the United States, he had learned duly to appreciate the tales of American victories, both by sea and land.

Convinced that, the moment the actions between British and American ships could

be submitted to arithmetical calculation, the popular delusion respecting them would cease, the author, upon his arrival at Halifax, Nova Scotia, commenced transmitting to the editor of the Naval Chronicle, under the signature of "Boxer," a series of letters on the subject. As these were written soon after the accounts had transpired, it was hardly possible to avoid some mistatements; nor would a literary correspondence admit of very minute details. Subsequently, the author published at Halifax, a pamphlet, entituled,—"An Inquiry into the merits of the principal Naval Actions between Great Britain and the United States, &c."—This was a decided improvement upon the letters; but, as nearly all the British ships had left the station, and the dearth of materials been encreased by the non-appearance in print of the British official accounts, in as many as twelve of the actions, much still remained to be done. The colonial public, however, gave the work a most flattering reception: in the short space of two months, nearly 2000 copies went off; and the remainder,

about 500 in number, the author brought with him to England.

A second edition, or, rather, an entirely new work, is now offered to the public. Not only have the details of each action been more fully and correctly stated, and the comparative force of the parties, more clearly exhibited; but many naval occurrences of the late war, not noticed in the Halifax edition, have been added: and, as the American historians have commenced attacking the British naval character, from the war of 1776, it was incumbent upon the author to bestow a slight retrospect upon the events of that early period.

To obviate the charge of partiality, so often alleged against histories of war-events, the published official accounts, American as well as British, are inserted in an Appendix. The plates are intended to illustrate the subject, not to ornament the work. Plate 1 shows the description of shot used by the Americans, during the whole of the late war; at first, attempted to be concealed under the words "round and grape." Plates 2 and 3 explain

themselves. The author had intended to represent, in a fourth plate, the profile-views of the British and American frigates, but wanted interest to procure copies of the sheer-draughts: indeed, it becomes him to state that, his own assiduity alone, enabled him to give any plates at all. He might, it is true, have procured a drawing of the action between the Shannon and Chesapeake, or Pelican and Argus; but here he must have trusted to the pencil of another; and so little is generally thought due to the relative size and force of the ships, provided the piece, as a whole, produces a striking effect, that he has preferred being a plate deficient, to introducing one, calculated to please the fancy, at the risk of entrapping the judgment, of his readers.

With respect to the general credit of his work, the author has spared no pains or expense, to render it worthy the subject upon which it treats. For the chief of his facts, not extracted from the official accounts and American naval histories, he is indebted to the ready communications of many distinguished

naval officers: the remaining facts are the result of his own observation and inquiries, as well while a prisoner, as since his escape.

Before the reader pronounces upon any harsh expression he may observe in the work, let him study, attentively, the grounds upon which it is uttered. National character is a sensitive thing; and, surely, the existing peace between the two countries does not oblige us to let pass, unrefuted, the foulest aspersions, or wholly to suppress the feelings of a just indignation. How little the Americans consult any punctilio of the kind, may be seen in a collection of libels upon both British navy and army, published as late as September last; and dedicated to the "Honorable James Munro," on the eve of his becoming president of the United States. The high tone assumed by the American author, when speaking of the *intentions* of his government, coupled with the dedication of his work, is a convincing proof, that he was sanctioned in the performance of it; and that, had he thought the deck-plans, or sheer-draughts, of any of the Ame-

rican ships of war, would further his object, the American navy-board, when applied to on the subject, would not have thought it expedient to withhold them from his sight.

In the separate details of each action, particularly those of the late war, the author has endeavoured at a methodical arrangement, something like the following:

Meeting of the ships.

Details of the action. { British and American accounts compared together.

British / American } ship's damages,—loss. do. do.

British / American } ship's guns, and complement of men and boys. } do. do.

Dimensions of the ships. do. do.

Comparative force of the ships computed, and exhibited in a statement.

Remarks arising out of that statement; illustrations, &c.

The merits of the different actions might have been detailed in less than half the space they occupy in the present work, had not the American editors, by heaping falsehood upon falsehood, so often compelled the author,—not unfrequently by a tedious operation to both the

reader and himself,—to remove the obstruction ere he could proceed. Yet he does not pledge himself to have remarked upon all the contradictions and inconsistencies to be found in the American official accounts: much remains for the reader's discernment. Had the suppressed British letters duly appeared in the Gazette, there would have been something to counteract, in the public mind, the baneful effects of the American accounts, so freely circulated, without a word of comment, by British journalists; and the author would not now have to eradicate one impression, before he can hope to succeed with another.

There were a few boat-attacks and other spirited enterprises, performed upon the coast of the United States, that are not recorded in these pages. The chief reason for omitting them was, the impossibility of getting at the relative force of the parties; without which, the details would comprise no more than what had been seen by the public. The same motives, added to the work's having already exceeded, by upwards of 130 pages, the limits originally

assigned to it, induced the author to leave out of his plan, the numerous gallant actions fought by British packets and merchant-ships, with American privateers. It is the actions between the public cruizers on each side,—the higher classes especially,—that stand as conspicuous national events; and which ought, therefore, to be handed down to posterity in characters of truth.

An earlier appearance of the present work, might have rendered it more acceptable; but the author had only to choose between, waiting till he had obtained the required information from officers dispersed all over the United Kingdom, and rashly committing to print, a mass of crude facts and imperfect details, upon so highly interesting a subject. Indeed, it was only in February last, that the full particulars of the wanton attack made by the U. S. ship Peacock upon the honorable East India company's cruizer Nautilus, appeared in an authenticated form; and yet more recently, that the last American work on the occurrences of the late war, arrived in this country.

Without the latter, the advantage of the reply, after an adversary has exhausted his eloquence in embellishing his own, and blackening our cause, would have been lost: without the former, an important event of the late war, would only have reached the public, disfigured by American misrepresentation.

The question may be asked,—Have we not already, in the Annual Registers and other periodical works, faithful accounts of the naval events of the late American war?—In not one of them, are the actions between British and American ships correctly stated. Nor is it surprising, when we consider, that the editors, in the numerous cases in which the British official letters were not published, had hastily to glean their materials from the rumours of the day, or the official and other accounts of the Americans. Even here, had the authorities been cited, the antidote, in most cases, would have accompanied the poison; but, very often, the latter was rendered more potent by the editor's remarks; and more so still, when

the judgment that dictated them, had become warped by the spirit of party.

The present work differs from others upon the same subject, in one material point; the attempt to exhibit the comparative force in naval actions, by placing in confrontation, first, the amount, in pounds-weight, or calibers, of the shot thrown by each ship or fleet, in a broadside, or discharge from all their guns upon one side, distinguishing the long guns from the carronades; then, the complement or complements of men and boys, and lastly, the size in tons, of each opposing ship or fleet. The reasons for adopting this method, have been fully set forth in the first or introductory chapter. Another point of difference consists, in submitting to the reader's view, the enemy's official account of each action. It is seldom we see a French official account; and then, the aid of a translator is required, to give it general currency: whereas an American official account no sooner meets the eye of an Englishman, than it finds its way to both his head and his heart.

In a work like the present, the reader may expect some political discussions, upon the origin of the late American war, the manner in which it was conducted by each party, and the merits of the treaty by which it terminated. If so, he will be disappointed: the author has confined his attention to naval subjects; and, should he have succeeded in exposing to ridicule, American bombast, and in vindicating the character of British seamen, from that pertinacious system of falsehood and detraction, upon which the Americans have founded their novel pretensions to excel us in deeds of arms on the ocean,—he has accomplished his object.

London, June 1st, 1817.

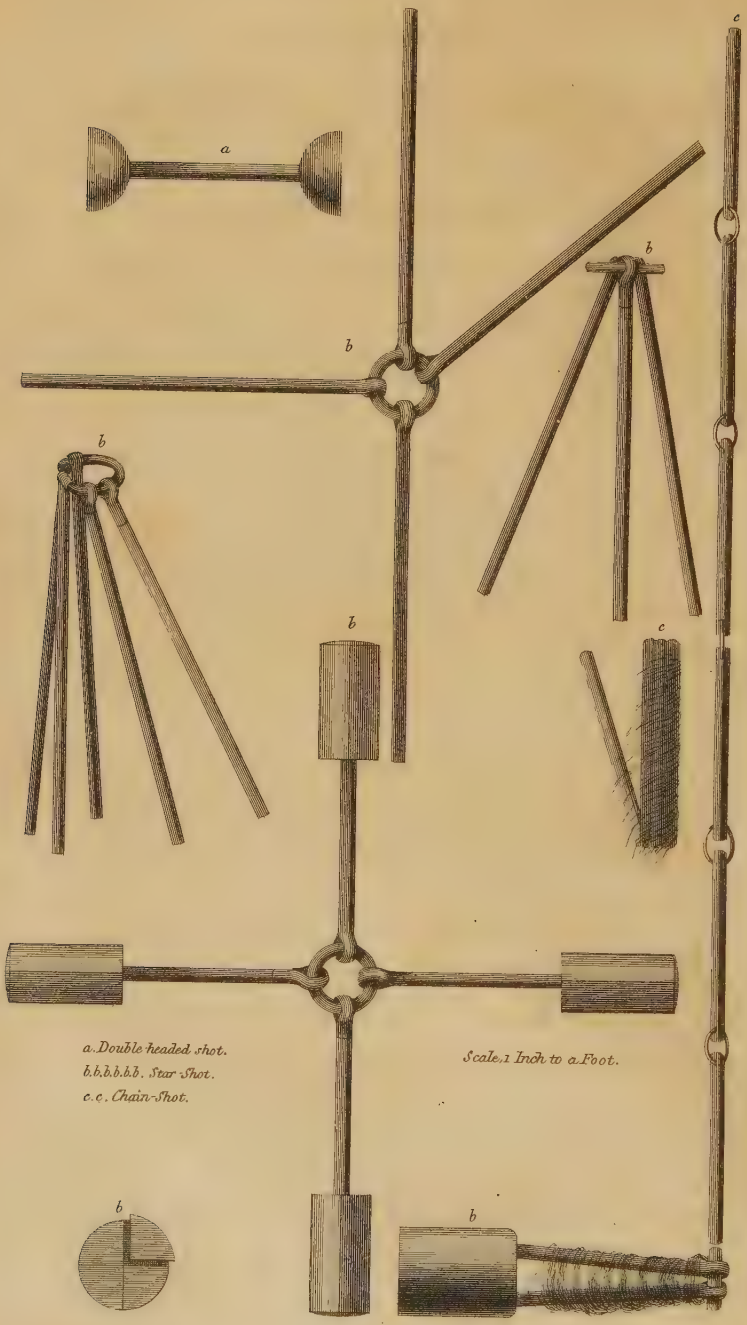
ERRATA.

Page 2	line	29,	*dele* Neptune her charioteer.
—	—	30,	*for* his *read* a.
35	—	14,	*for* 28 *read* 26.
—	—	17,	*for* four *read* two.
—	—	19,	*for* 6 *read* 2.
62	—	8,	*for* 1780 *read* 1800.
141	—	10,	*for* fore *read* main.
322	—	5,	*for* squadron *read* squadrons.
332	—	12,	*dele* men.
419	—	19,	*for* larger than, *read* nearly as large as.
522	—	29,	*for* four *read* three.
xviii	—	13,	*for* 29 *read* 20.

N.B. *The author has in preparation, a work, intended to be in uniformity to the present, upon the* military *occurrences of the late war between Great Britain and the United States of America.*

PLATE 1

Dismantling, or American" round and grape" shot. *see App.p.XVI. XXXIX.*



Published as the Act directs May 10th 1817. by T.Egerton Whitehall.

CHAPTER I.

American naval histories—Their partiality—List of several—Nature of a ship's armament—Different kinds of cannon in use—Their comparative qualities—Advantages of large-sized shot—Weight of less consequence than diameter—Americans of a contrary opinion—Its fallacy exposed—British and American shot in use—Advantage of shifting guns—Definition of a ship's broadside-weight of metal—Necessity of estimating the complement—Also the size in tons—British and American ships' rates—Deception upon the public—New order in council—Difference in ships of war, as to number of decks—Not a true criterion of force—Nor difference in rig, of size—Injunction to the reader on the foregoing heads.

IN a work professing to exhibit correct accounts of the naval occurrences of a war, it would be an insult to the reader's understanding, to call for his decision upon *exparte* statements. Yet, not one of the naval histories published in the United States, pays any respect to the statements of an enemy. American official accounts, however improbable or contradictory, are held too sacred to be doubted; and even idle

rumour, and newspaper paragraphs, are often made the grounds of the most positive assertions, upon the most important points.

The American details of their naval actions, will be extracted from four of their principal works on that subject. It may be as well to give, at once, a summary of their respective title-pages:

"The NAVAL HISTORY of the UNITED STATES, from the commencement of the REVOLUTIONARY WAR to the present time; by THOMAS CLARK; second edition; published at PHILADELPHIA, January 3, 1814."

"An IMPARTIAL and CORRECT HISTORY of the War, &c.: carefully compiled from official documents: by JOHN LOW, at NEW YORK, in 1815."

"NAVAL MONUMENT, containing official and other accounts of the battles fought between the navies of the UNITED STATES and GREAT BRITAIN, during the late war, &c.: by A. BOWEN, at BOSTON, in 1816."

"HISTORICAL SKETCHES of the late war between the UNITED STATES and GREAT BRITAIN, &c.; by JOHN LEWIS THOMPSON, at PHILADELPHIA; third edition; 1816."

One of these works, the "Naval Monument," has a remarkably modest frontispiece. It represents America riding triumphant on the waves, and Neptune, her charioteer, pointing, with his trident, to a cluster of American wor-

thies, fantastically stuck upon a tall monument; whose foundation, by the bye, is not clearly discernible. Addison has described the design in a very few words.—"One kind of burlesque," says he, "represents mean persons in the accoutrements of heroes."

The "Naval History of the United States" partakes rather of an official character; and Mr. Clark, in his first edition, did style himself,—"U. States topographical engineer." He has, evidently, been allowed access to all the public records. Both democrats and federalists lavishly praised his first edition; and the author has, very judiciously, placed in front of his second, under the imposing head of "Criticism," several complimentary scraps. Among them, is the following from the American "Portefolio:"

"This is a very interesting collection of facts and documents, no where else to be found in so convenient a form, on the most important subject which now engrosses the attention of the American people. The naval history of a country is a theme on which we all dwell with peculiar pleasure; since our national pride cannot fail to receive its highest gratification from a series of brilliant and daring achievements. The author of the present work has, therefore, rendered a useful service, by enabling the public at large to become more familiar with our naval annals."

A third edition, and a dedication to the late American secretary of state, Mr. Munro, confer some authority upon the "Sketches of the war." That, and the "Naval History," may be considered as speaking the sentiments of the American people, upon the great national subject that fills the pages of both.

The indulgence of the naval reader is now requested, while a few observations, chiefly calculated for such as are unacquainted with the subject, are submitted, upon the nature of a ship's armament, and upon what really constitutes her *force*,—or power to do and resist injury, when contending with an enemy.

That ships constructed for the purposes of war, mount guns or cannon, is well known. Guns have their cylinders of various diameters or calibers, from $2\frac{1}{2}$ to 8 inches; and each gun is named from the weight of the shot, which its cylinder will admit to pass freely. Thus, a gun of a $2\frac{1}{2}$ inch caliber, being capable of receiving and discharging an iron shot that weighs half a pound, is called a half-pounder, or more commonly, a *swivel*, from the way in which it is usually mounted; and a gun of an 8-inch caliber, discharging a shot weighing sixty eight pounds, is called a 68-pounder. Between these extremes, are several gradations, each distinguished in a similar manner.

The gun which throws a shot of sixty eight

pounds weight, was invented in 1779, at Carron in Scotland; and thence called a carronade. This gun is shorter and lighter, in proportion to its caliber, than any of the common kind. The carronade admits of variety in caliber, but not to so great an extent as the long gun; the cylinders of few of the former being below fourinches in diameter; the caliber of a 9-pounder.

No long gun at present in our service throws a heavier shot than of thirty two pounds. There is, however, a kind of gun, still shorter than the carronade, the diameter of whose bore extends to thirteen inches. These guns are named mortars and howitzers; and are designated according to the diameter of their bores, thus: "A 13-inch mortar;"—"An 8-inch howitzer." They are chiefly employed to throw shells; and, for that purpose, mounted on board peculiar vessels, called bomb-ships.

Within these few years, a sort of medium-gun has been invented, for sea-service, called by us, *Gover*'s, or *Congreve*'s gun. The Americans call their's a *Columbiad;* probably from its having been cast at the cannon-foundery situate in the district of Columbia, in the United States.

The English short long-gun weighs about two-fifths less than a gun of the same caliber, of the common construction; but a 68-pound-carronade weighs only one-sixth more than the lightest

24-pound gun, and a 42-pound carronade weighs considerably less than the lightest 18-pound gun.

Owing to this circumstance, the carronade requires fewer hands to work it, and can be loaded and pointed with more quickness and facility, than the long gun. The benefit to be derived from employing a species of cannon capable of throwing shot of so extraordinary a size, appears in the following extract from a celebrated treatise on gunnery;

"The most important advantage of heavy bullets is this, that with the same velocity, they break out holes in all solid bodies, in a greater proportion than their weight: that is, for instance, a 24-pound shot will, with the same velocity, break out a hole in any wall, rampart or solid beam, in which it lodges, above eight times larger than will be made by a 3-pound shot; for, its diameter being double, it will make a superficial fracture above four times as great as the 3-pounder, (more of a smaller hole being closed up by the springing of the solid body than of a great one,) and it will penetrate to more than twice the depth. By this means, the firmest walls of masonry are easily cut through their whole substance by heavy shot, which could never be effected by those of a smaller caliber; and in ships, the strongest beams and masts are hereby fractured, which a great number of

smaller bullets would scarcely injure." (Robins, p. 285.)

In Rees's Encyclopedia, title, *Cannon*, are the following additional remarks upon large-sized shot.—" The 68-pound carronade is superior to the long 24 and 32-pounders, particularly in close combats, by the size of the holes which its shot makes in the side of a ship, and from its likewise passing through the same with less velocity. For a shot, especially if its diameter be but small, that passes very quickly through a ship's side, makes only a clean hole; whereas one of a large diameter that penetrates it with less celerity, makes a rough and ragged hole, by tearing and splintering the planks and timbers."

It may be necessary to offer a few words on the comparative distances to which cannon of the different calibers and descriptions will project a shot. Robins, who wrote upwards of thirty years before the invention of carronades; and therefore had reference to long guns only, says:—" The larger bullets being less resisted in proportion to their weight than the smaller, the distance to which these larger bullets fly with the same proportion of powder, exceeds the flight of the smaller ones, almost in the proportion of their diameters; so that a 32-pound shot, for instance, being somewhat more than six inches in diameter, and a 9-pound shot but four inches, the 32-pound shot will fly near half

as far again, as that of 9-pound, if both pieces are so elevated as to range to the furthest distance possible." (P. 284.) In another place he says, "a 24-pounder, loaded in the customary manner, and elevated to 8°, ranges its bullet, at a medium, to about a mile and a half; whereas, a 3-pounder, which is of half the diameter, will, in the same circumstances, range but little more than a mile." (P. 256.)

Some information relating to the range of carronades, is here extracted from a little work entitled the "Naval Pocket Gunner."

"*Range with carronades, 1-12th the weight of the shot, with one wad; the line of fire from six to nine feet above the water's level.*"

Nature.	68-pndr.	42-pndr.	32-pndr.	24-pndr.	18-pndr.	12-pndr.
Point-blank ...	450 yds.	400 yds.	330 yds.	300 yds.	270 yds.	230 yds.
Five degrees...	1280 ..	1170 ..	1087 ..	1050 ..	1000 ..	870 ..

Therefore, a ship, armed with carronades only, however large in caliber, would be quite at the mercy of an adversary, armed with long 12 or 18-pounders; provided the latter ship, by possessing the weather-gage, or a decided superiority in sailing, could choose her distance. Let the two ships once close, and the larger balls would soon establish their destructive superiority.

There is another advantage attending large cannon, which Mr. Robins justly calls "a capital one;"—"that of carrying the weight of their bullet in grape or lead-shot, and thereby annoying the enemy more effectually, than could be done by ten times the number of small pieces." (P. 285.)

On referring again to the "Naval Pocket Gunner," it appears, that the difference in the relative weights of grape-shot, when made up, is, in some cases, much greater than exists between the relative weights of round shot. For instance, a single grape-shot for a 24-pounder weighs two pounds; and, for an 18-pounder, one pound eight ounces: but while the grape, when made up, weighs for a 24-pounder, twenty four pounds four ounces, it weighs for an 18-pounder only sixteen pounds eight ounces.

It is commonly thought, that a shot fired at a very long range, should it even strike a ship, would do far less injury, than a shot fired from a short distance. The extract from Rees's Encyclopedia, already given, disproves this; and, to the same effect, are the words of Mr. Robins:—"It is a matter of experiment, that a bullet, which can but just pass through a piece of timber, and loses almost all its motion thereby, has a much better chance of rending and fracturing it, than if it passed through it with a much greater velocity." (P. 291.) And, in another

place:—"In penetrating solid bodies, that bullet which has but just force enough to go through, will produce much greater effect, than a bullet which has a considerable velocity left, after it has got through." (P. 307.)

The Americans, it appears, have "accurately weighed together" their shot and ours, of the same caliber; and one naval commander officially states, that a British 32-pound shot weighs one pound three-quarters more than an American one. This alleged difference in weight (rather less than one-eighteenth) the Americans ascribe, not to the diameter of their shot being smaller than ours of the same nominal weight, but to the texture being looser, arising from some difference in the two methods of casting. Whenever the Americans *do* venture upon a calculation of comparative weight of metal, they take care to profit by this discovery.

It is not worth enquiring, whether or not this alleged trifling variation in weight between American and British shot, does exist; or whether it may not arise from a new shot having been picked out on one side, and an old one, dented in the casting, or abraded by rust, on the other. Under the article already quoted from Rees's Encyclopedia, it is stated, that "a hollow shot equal in diameter to a 68-pound shot, but weighing only forty pounds, fired from a suitable distance, penetrated a bulk-head, as

thick as the sides of a first-rate; and afterwards striking against an oak post or stud, nine inches square, tore, shattered, and splintered it almost to pieces."

It has just appeared, that one advantage of a large shot, is the size of the hole it makes in a ship's side; and that the less the celerity of the shot in its passage through, the greater will be the damage. Were the exact weight, and not the diameter, of a shot to be taken, in proof of its destructive power, the above hollow shot, of eight inches diameter, filled with combustible matter till it weighed forty eight pounds, must be considered as less effective than a solid iron shot of the same diameter, weighing sixty eight pounds; and that, precisely as 48 is to 68. Either the Americans mean this, or they mean nothing. It is to be hoped, they will not again broach a principle so truly ridiculous.

The only kinds of shot used in the British navy, are, round, grape, and case or canister, a smaller species of grape. But the Americans, both in their public, and private-armed vessels, employ, under the denomination of "round and grape," chain, bar, star, and double-headed shot; which, in close combat especially, enables them to unrig a ship, much more quickly than could be accomplished by the shot in general use. An accurate representation of these dismantling shot may be seen in Plate I.

The editor of the "Naval History" says that, —"in an engagement between ship and ship, the effect produced is, by the broadside, or the *number* of guns placed in battery on one side of a ship." Mr. Clark should have said—"number *and description* of guns;" his present statement implying, that a 3 and a 32-pounder are productive of equal effect.

The armed schooners of the United States often appear with their guns fitted in a manner, that, one would think, requires only to be known, to be generally adopted. For instance, a schooner of 80 or 90 tons, upon which we should place six 12-pound carronades at least, would, as an American privateer, carry three long 12-pounders, upon pivot-carriages; so as to be used upon either broadside. Thus, while numerically of only half her former force, she throws the same weight of metal in broadside; and possesses the immense advantage of long guns over carronades of the same caliber.

All the American public ships derive a partial benefit from using shifting guns upon their upper decks; for which they are provided with spare ports, exclusive of those at the bow and stern. These guns, as well as those placed on pivot-carriages, belong to the broadside-force; and should be estimated accordingly. Mr. Clark, by including, in his

statement of the force of our frigates, the shifting or boat-carronade which they usually carry, admits the correctness of this principle.

Standing bow or stern-chasers, or any other guns in the ship, for which no broadside-ports (in contra-distinction to the bow or bridle-port) are provided; or which, from the construction of their carriages, cannot be fought, otherwise than through ports, will not be estimated. By a ship's broadside-weight of metal, is therefore to be understood, the united calibers, in pounds, of all the long guns and carronades, which she can "place in battery on one side of her;" whether those guns are stationed upon her decks, or in her tops.

The guns of a ship are useless lumps of iron, without men to handle them. A ship that has not men enough for all her guns upon the broadside, must either allot to each gun fewer hands than can properly work it, or fully man a part only of her guns, and leave the remainder unsupplied. In either case, that ship's whole force or power is not brought into action.

Suppose two ships, equal in guns, to engage; one to have full crews for every gun upon her broadside, marines for her gangways and tops, seamen in abundance to trim sails, repair running-rigging, clear away wrecks of spars, stop shot-holes; in short, men for every possible service in the ship. Let the other ship have men

enough to work two-third of her guns only, scarcely any to employ as marines, and so few for trimming sails and manœuvering the ship, or for hastily repairing slight accidents in the rigging, that she can neither take a position to rake her opponent, nor prevent being raked herself; her disability encreasing, by every shot that is fired. Will any one pronounce this to be an equal match? Yet, were a ship's force to be estimated from her guns only, the affirmative would be the answer, whatever absurdity it might involve.

Strictly speaking, every gun that cannot be manned, should be thrown out of the estimate. None would be by this such sufferers in fame, as the commanders of American privateers. One of their schooners, of ten heavy guns, might have captured, in quick succession, six merchant-ships, of twelve guns each; every one of which would, of course, be pronounced "superior" to herself. Yet the whole six British crews, would not, perhaps, outnumber the single American crew.

Again; when two ships grapple, of what consequence is an equality in cannon? She that has most men, with arms in their hands, will inevitably carry her opponent, unless, indeed, the advantage is rendered of no avail by a deficiency in valor. This fact has been established repeatedly, in the engagements with our packets,

armed transports, and even merchant-ships, as many a disappointed privateersman can testify.

American editors, in their statements of actions, conceal, not only the weight of metal, but, invariably, the complements, on each side; aware that, as "successful contributors to national character," they dare not make the disclosure.

In the present work, a ship's complement will be added to her broadside-weight of metal; and, as a British ship's complement always consists of a great proportion of boys; (and of very young ones, too;) while scarcely any are to be seen on board an American ship, it would be to consider men and boys as equal in effectiveness, not to enumerate them separately. The same distinction must be observed, when non-combatant-passengers are on board.

Hitherto, estimates of the comparative force of ships have been usually considered as complete, when the force in guns and men was accurately stated; but, it is submitted, a disparity in size, especially if it amounts to any thing beyond a fifth or a fourth, ought also to be included. For instance, the larger ship remains steadier in a rough sea; by which her guns are pointed with more effect, as, from the roominess of her decks, they are worked with more ease. Her additional length necessarily places the men further apart; thereby diminishing the

havoc made by the enemy's shot. The men have another security, in the additional thickness of her sides, through which the shot have to pass; and the ship herself is, from the same cause, enabled to withstand a longer and more furious cannonade. Then, the encreased diameter of the masts, yards, and rigging, adds to the difficulty of destroying or disabling them; and the stability of a ship's masts, after those of her adversary have fallen, generally decides the contest.

The advantage of thick sides has not escaped the discernment of the Americans; and, the discussion being confined to American ships, there could be no object in withholding it from the public, or in rendering it confused. Mr. Paul Hamilton, the American secretary of the navy, in his official letter, transmitting a "very valuable communication" from Captain Charles Stewart of the United States' navy, explicitly says:—"Besides, a 76" (a ship then proposed to be so rated) "is built of heavier timber, is intrinsically much stronger, than a frigate in all her works; and can sustain battering much longer, and with less injury. A shot which would sink a frigate, might be received by a 76 with but little injury. It might pass between wind and water through a frigate, when it would stick in the frame of a 76."—(N. Chron. vol. xxix. p. 466.)

This argument requires some explanation. If

the accounts of the Americans are to be credited, we have no ship in the British navy, not even the Caledonia and her class, "built of heavier timber" than the American 76s, or 74s, as they are now rated. Consequently, one of the latter *may* have been "built of heavier timber, and be intrinsically much stronger in all her works," than an American frigate; as is notoriously the case between a British 74 and a British frigate. The possession of the President, however, has decidedly proved, that the difference, if any, in the size of scantling, between a British 74 and an American frigate, is in favor of the latter. Yet, in answer to a charge in the British journals, that the large American frigates were 74s in disguise, Mr. Clark declaims a great deal about a British 74-gun ship's superiority in "compactness and strength of sides."

Between two British ships of war, the tonnage bears some proportion to the thickness of sides: and so it may between two American ships of war; but, between a British, and an American, ship of war, that rule generally fails. The following table, the several items of which are the result of actual measurement, will sufficiently illustrate this:

Built.	Present rates.	Names.		Tons.	Thickness of topsides, including outside plank, timber, and inside plank, at	
					mid-ship main-deck port-sill.	foremost quarter-deck port-sill.
					Ft. in.	Ft. in.
1797	54	President,—Am.		1533	1 8	1 5
1809	74	San Domingo,	British.	1819	1 7	1 1
1816	74	Hero, ...	British.	1741	1 7	1 1
1813	60	Leander, ...	British.	1571	1 5	1 0½
1813	46	Eurotas, ...	British.	1084	1 3	— 11

The San Domingo was Admiral Warren's flag-ship on the American station; and the Hero, recently built at Deptford, is esteemed one of the finest second-class 74s in the service. The Leander was constructed purposely to match the President, and her class; and the Eurotas considered strong enough to carry Congreve's 24-pounders upon the main-deck. The latter's top-sides will answer for those of British 46-gun frigates, in general.

It would appear, then, that British and American builders differ in their ideas as to what is the due proportion between the thickness of a ship of war's top-sides, and her length, breadth, and tonnage. Derrick says:—"In the year 1744 or 1745, a general complaint was made of the ships in his majesty's navy, that their scantlings were not so large and strong as they should

be."* Mr. Sepping's solid plan of building rises no higher than the level of the gun-deck. It may save the ship from sinking, but it will afford no additional shelter to the men at the guns.—True, no ship's side can resist a well-directed 18 or 24-pound shot, fired from a short distance; but may not a shot that is nearly spent, pass through a side fifteen inches thick, when it would lodge in a side twenty inches thick?

Some persons may imagine, that a stout, compact side would act as an impediment to sailing; a point so essential in a ship of war. On the contrary, the American ships are, proverbially, swift sailers; and the President, with such uncommon topsides, one of the swiftest among them. The quality of sailing depends chiefly upon the form of a ship's bottom, aided by her length. The Americans had, according to Charnock, discovered this, early in the war of 1776;† and they have now proved, clearly, that swift-sailing is not incompatible with the strongest construction.

A ship's masts and yards are generally in proportion to her size; but the lower-masts of American ships, are invariably stouter in proportion to their length, than the lower-masts of British ships. A comparison of the main-masts of different ships will explain this:

* Derrick's Mem. of the R. Navy, p. 136.

† Charnock, M. Arch., vol. iii. p. 18.

Main-masts.	Br. 64.	Am. 44	Br. 46.*	Am. 36	Br. 32.*	Am. 18	Br. 26.*	Am. 14
	Ft. in.	Ft. in.	Ft. in.	Ft. in.	Ft. in.	Ft. in.	Ft. in.	Ft. in.
Length, ...	100 0	101 6	92 0	93 4	75 0	75 0	66 0	62 0
Diameter	2 9½	2 11	2 3½	2 6	2 0	2 1½	1 7¼	1 10½

It is easy to conceive, that the smaller the mast, the less will be the difficulty of destroying it by shot; but there are few persons who can form an adequate idea of the state of a ship, with her masts all gone; engaged with another, whose masts are all standing.

The masts, in their fall, crush men, and disable guns. If the wreck hangs over the side engaged, resistance is suspended; or, if a few guns can still be used, the flash from them sets the wreck in flames, and adds to the confusion. Having no locomotive power, no sail to counteract the motion of the sea, the ship becomes an ungovernable hulk, reeling from side to side, and dipping her guns at every roll. These, or a part of them, she may discharge at the enemy; but, under such circumstances, how many shot will take effect? The other ship, benefiting by the pressure of the wind upon her sails, rides steady amidst the waves; and advances, turns, and retreats, at pleasure. Her guns, she fires with precision; and either sinks her opponent, or compels her to surrender.

* Present rates.

It remains to say a few words on the difference observable between British and American tonnage. According to an official paper laid before the American government, the President measured 1444 tons,—fractions not given;* whereas she measures, by our method, 1533-$\frac{5}{94}$ths of a ton.

The President's "keel for tonnage," as it appears in an American publication, is 145 feet; we make it 146 feet, $7\frac{3}{4}$ inches.—In both cases, it is a mere calculation, intended to allow for the rake or inclination of the ship's stem, and stern.

In casting the tonnage, the first multiplicator of the Americans, is the breadth across the frame, or *moulded breadth;* (by them usually called "breadth of beam;") of the British, the same, encreased by the thickness of the plank at the ship's bottom, or the *extreme breadth.* The second multiplicator of each, is the respective half-breadths. The American divisor is 95; the British 94. Thus:

	Ft. in.	F. in.	Ft. in.	Tons.
Am. method.	145 0	×43 6	=6308×21 9	=1371999÷5=1444 $\frac{19}{95}$ths.
Brit. ditto ...	146 $7\frac{3}{4}$	×44 4	=6502×22 2	=143044÷94=1533 $\frac{22}{94}$ths.

The President's "moulded breadth," as here stated, is as the Americans have made it; but, by actual measurement, it is two inches more. It is very common for ships, by *falling out* at the

* Nav. Chron. vol. xxix. p. 458.

sides, to exceed, by a trifle, the builder's estimate.

This difference in tonnage, from not being generally known, occasions mistakes, in pronouncing upon the relative size of British and American vessels; and, in discussions of that nature, is, evidently, an advantage to the latter. All ships, therefore, American as well as British, whose tonnage may appear in the present work, will have been measured according to the British method.

The application of the *size in tons*, as part of a ship's force, cannot be reasonably objected to by the Americans; because, as has appeared already, British ships of greater tonnage than the American 44s, are exceeded by them, in thickness of topsides; and equalled, at least, in stoutness of spars.

To convey a better idea of a ship's size, than the tonnage alone may afford, the length on deck, and extreme breadth, of most, if not all, of the ships engaged, will be given; and, as the masts are such important auxiliaries in action, and the squareness of the yards may contribute to shew the size of the ship, the length and diameter of the main-mast and main-yard, will also, when obtainable, be added.

Having endeavoured to explain the nature of a ship's armament; as well as to point out, that an accurate statement of a ship's force, ought to

comprise, her *broadside metal in pounds*, both in *long guns* and *carronades;* her *complement of men and boys;* and her *size in tons*—a clear view of the subject demands a few observations, upon the popular notion about the rate, the class or form, and the mode of rig, of armed vessels in general.

Previous to the invention of carronades, a ship of war was designated, or *rated*, according to the number of guns she actually mounted. At first, carronades, by two or four at a time, were introduced on board the frigates and higher classes: to receive which carronades, additional ports were cut through the sides of the quarter-deck; the ports for long guns not answering for carronades, without considerable alteration. These carronades became, then, an addition to the ship's armament, not expressed or understood by her *rate*. As new ships were added to the navy, carronade-ports were constructed by the builder, upon the forecastle, and all along the quarter-deck; except where the interference of the main-rigging required a long gun. Thus, a ship was made to mount as many as eight or ten pieces of cannon, more than were expressed as her actual armament.

This addition to a ship's rated armament might be illustrated by the re-equipment of most of his majesty's ships, built earlier than the year 1790. There was, however, in existence until very lately, a ship built as long ago as

1757; which may best serve to establish the point. The Southampton frigate, in every list of the British navy from 1757 to 1792, is stated to have carried the following guns: twenty six 12-pounders upon the main-deck; four 6-pounders upon the quarter-deck; and two 6-pounders upon the forecastle; total 32 guns: precisely what she rated, in every list up to that announcing her loss, by shipwreck, in November 1812. But, at that period, the Southampton mounted, upon the quarter-deck and forecastle, ten carronades, 24-pounders, a 12-pound boat-carronade, and four long 6s; making, with her twenty six long 12s upon the main-deck, 41, instead of 32 guns, the number she rated.

The first British-built frigate, of "38 guns," was, according to Charnock's lists, the Minerva, of 940 tons, built in 1780; and, up to the year 1792, the establishment of guns for that class was,—twenty eight 18-pounders upon the main-deck; eight 9-pounders upon the quarter-deck; and two 12-pounders upon the forecastle; total, 38 guns. At present, the frigates of this class, encreased in size to 1080 tons, mount upon the quarter-deck and forecastle, fourteen carronades, 32-pounders, and two long 9s; making, with their main-deck battery, and boat-gun, 47, instead of 38 guns, the rated number.

Previous to the Prince Regent's order in council, recently promulgated, it would have puzzled

any one out of the naval department, to enumerate the guns of a ship, from seeing her *rate* in the list. By people in general, the rate and actual armament, were considered as synonimous terms; and, therefore, in proportion as the two terms differed, was the deception upon the public. We read in Steel:—"La Traave, 44, taken by the Andromache, 38." The same list designates the former, as a *British* ship, thus: "Traave, 36." And what did the Andromache mount?—According to the present admiralty-lists, 46 guns. We read, also, of the capture of "La Renommée, 44;" but, when that ship, with an altered name, and three more guns placed upon her, is captured from us, Mr. Steel calls her "Java, 38." The very same list contains the following statement: "La Furieuse, 50, taken July 6, by the Bonne Citoyenne, 18;" when a reference to Captain Mounsey's official letter* would have shewn the editor, that La Furieuse, although manned with a frigate's complement, and pierced for 48, mounted only 20 guns. The thing, in all its parts, was gallant enough, without the aid of exaggeration.

It was not the least inconvenience attending the rating system, that it had a partial application, even in our own service. For instance, one of Steel's "18-gun" sloops, if a brig, or a cor-

* Nav. Chron. vol. xxii. p. 346.

vette-ship, mounted (without reckoning the boat-carronade) no more guns than her rate expressed; but, if a deep-waisted ship, 26 or 28 guns.

To what may we, in a great measure, impute the national surprise at the capture of a British frigate of "49 guns," by an American one of "44 guns," but the delusion created by the repeated victories of a British frigate of "38 guns" over a French frigate of "44 guns"?—Was the public to know, that the first British frigate was stated at the guns she mounted, the second at the guns she rated; and that the reverse of this occurred in the case of the American, and the French frigate; thus: British frigate, 49 guns, American frigate, 44 (instead of 56) guns; British frigate, 38 (instead of 46) guns, French frigate, 44 guns?

Foreigners, with almost pardonable acrimony, will often speak of this habit of contrasting the rate of our ships with the mounting of theirs; and how can an Englishman reply? With what face can we blame the Americans, for having acted in the same manner towards us?

It is due to the gallantry of British seamen, and to the honorable character of British officers, to state, that most of the French ships of "44 guns" were larger, and far more numerously manned, than the "38 gun frigates" that captured them; and, partly on account of the dif-

ference between French and English measures, usually mounted heavier metal; upon the main-deck, especially. Were an officer, in his public letter, to state how many guns his own ship mounted, it would be informing the lords of the admiralty, of what they are already supposed to know. He has only to describe the force of the enemy's ship; being well aware that a reference to the navy-office books, will procure, for any one who may desire to publish an account of the action, the true force of his ship. Nor does a British officer, if properly applied to, ever refuse to give the fullest information on the subject. It is the editors and publishers of such accounts, and not the British officers, who deserve censure for imposing upon the public.

The variation between the rate, and mounting, of the ships of the British navy, was, as we have seen, a gradual process; attributable rather to accident than design. Was that the case with the ships in the American navy?

An act of congress, dated the 27th of March, 1794, authorised the building of "four ships of 44 guns, and two of 36 guns;" and, in 1813, the following appeared in a Philadelphia newspaper:

Extract from a Report of the secretary at war, April 1st, 1798.

" It appears that the first estimate rendered to congress, was for frigates of the common size and dimensions, rated at 36 and 44 guns; and that the first appropriations for the armament, were founded upon this estimate. It also appears that, when their size and dimensions came to be more maturely considered, due reference being had to the ships they might have to contend with, it was deemed proper, so to *alter their dimensions, without changing their rates*, as to extend their sphere of utility as much as possible.

" It was expected, from this alteration, that they would possess, in an eminent degree, the advantage of sailing; that, separately, they would be *superior to any single European frigate of the usual dimensions;* that, if assailed by numbers, they would be always able to lead a-head; that they could never be obliged to go into action but on their own terms, except in a calm; and that, in heavy weather, they would be *capable of engaging double-deck ships.*

" These are the principal advantages contemplated from the change made in their dimensions. Should they be realized, they will more than compensate for having materially swelled the body of expenditures."

Here is an official document, pointing out the

"advantages" of sending forth ships, of greater size and force than their rate implies; evidently, to operate as a cheat or delusion upon the rest of the world. There was no "European frigate of the usual dimensions," but was known to be a third smaller, and a third weaker, than an American frigate "of 44 guns." But why to rate "of 44 guns"? Because the largest "European frigates" then *mounted* that number; consequently, a frigate "*of* 44 guns" was apparently equal to a frigate "*of* 44 guns." The difference between the *rate* and *mounting* was supposed to be a secret; the above "*Report of the secretary at war*" not being suffered to see the light, till of late years, when some of the "advantages" of the deception, had become, indeed, "realized"!

Happily, it was reserved for Britain to pluck the veil of deception from the rating system. Her gallant tars require not the aid of fiction, to give a colour to their claims. The order in council expresses, "that all the vessels in the navy shall in future be distinguished by the number of guns and carronades they actually mount, and not according to the erroneous denominations which had long since grown into use."—America, surely, will not now have the face to continue her rating system. In verification of the old proverb, she will find it her in-

terest to be honest; but it will not be forgotten—who set her the example.

The *rate*, as we have seen, is an arbitrary distinction, liable to continual fluctuation. There is, between ships of war, another distinction, general and permanent. Thus we have, the three-decker, or ship with three whole battery-decks; the two-decker, or ship with two whole battery-decks; the one-decker, or frigate, and its variety, the corvette or cutter, with one whole battery-deck.

The corvette has simply one deck or battery, with sometimes two small spaces elevated from four to six feet above the level of the deck; one situate aft, called the poop or round-house, the other forward, called the top-gallant-forecastle. Upon one or both of these short decks, two or three small guns are sometimes employed in action; but, there being no ramparts to protect the men, the station is always a dangerous one, especially within the range of musketry.

The top-gallant-forecastle, extended aft from the stem to the belfry, (a little abaft the fore-mast,) and the poop or round-house, from the stern to nearly the centre of the ship, become the forecastle and quarter-deck. These are joined by a narrow platform, or range of planks, laid horizontally along the upper part of the ship's side, called the gangway; a vacancy being left in the middle, which opens to the upper or

main-deck, and forms the waist. Ships of this construction are called deep-waisted; and, if armed for war, and with but one whole deck, frigates.

Vessels not deep-waisted, whether corvettes, or such as have two whole decks reaching from the stem to the stern, with or without a poop and top-gallant-forecastle, have also a quarter-deck and forecastle, of the same extent as if separated in the middle by the waist. But a ship of war's upper-deck, when of this fabric, is usually called, the spar-deck. Of this description, are the upper-decks of the Majestic, and Saturn, *razees;* of the Leander, Newcastle, and new Java; and of the President, and the large American frigates of her class. None of these vessels are therefore deep-waisted, or frigate-built ships; although courtesy has gained for them the appellation of frigates.

The frigate-class formerly descended very low. It was only in the year 1760, that deep-waisted ships, rating 18 guns and under, began to be classed as sloops; and not until very lately, that ships rating 24 guns, were removed to the same station. Yet neither the French nor the Spaniards admit any intermediate class between a frigate-built ship, however small, and a single-decked flush-ship; both calling the one a frigate, and the other a corvette. The Americans called the Cyane, rating 24 guns, a frigate; and most of our

frigate-built 18 or 20-gun sloops, of the old rate, if they happened to fire a few shot at an American privateer, were similarly designated.

The quarter-deck and forecastle, with the deep-waist, are common to both regular two, and three-decked ships; and all the latter, and most of the former, have also a poop or round-house; but which, unlike that upon corvettes, is constructed with ramparts and ports, similar to the quarter-deck.

Without enquiring which ship's deck is the longer of the two, or has placed upon it the greater number and weight of guns, the world calls for proof, that ships of one denomination are not of equal force. Upon the same principle, persons imagine, that the ship of three decks, or batteries, must necessarily be superior in force to the ship of two; and so, in succession, down to the corvette.

Whether, on the contrary, a disparity, in some cases four-fold, may not exist between ships of war, having the same number of decks, a few examples will shew.

The class of three-deckers is limited, but even they are not equal in force. A comparison between ships of this class is not necessary.

For one of the two-deckers, let us take the Malta, with the force she mounted in 1812. To heighten the contrast, a two-decked "44" might be produced; but, as that useless class is now

dismissed the service, the two-decked 50, or present 58, gun ship (not much better) will be opposed to the Malta.

	Malta.		Old 50-gun ship.
Lower-deck	2 carron.	68-pndrs.	22 long 24 pndrs.
	30 long	32 ——	
Upper-deck	32 ——	24 ——	22 —— 12 ——
Quarter-deck and forecastle	20 Govers.L.	24 ——	6 —— 9 ——
	2 carr.	68 ——	8 carr. 24 ——
	1 ——	24 ——	1 —— 18 ——
	1 ——	18 ——	
Poop.....	6 ——	24 ——	
Total....	94 guns.		59 guns.

Comparative force of two TWO-DECKERS:

	Malta.		Old 50-gun ship.
Broadside-metal in pounds	l. guns	1152	427
	carr.	178	114
		1330	541
Complement of men and boys.....		689	343
Size in tons		2255	1044

That a contest between two such ships, is not merely an ideal case, was proved on the 18th of August, 1798, when a British 50, the old Leander, under the command of the present Vice-admiral Sir Thomas Boulden Thompson, Bart. engaged, at close action, for six hours and a half, le Genereux, a ship very little inferior in weight of metal, and actually superior in number of men, to the Malta.

For the one-decked, or frigate-class, a ship as much a frigate as the new Leander, Newcastle, and new Java, will be produced. The Majestic,

it is true, had been a 74; and the Anson and Indefatigable, 64s; yet they all classed as frigates. If the Majestic had not been intended to represent a frigate, why was her construction altered? The Americans called the Cyane, when they captured her, a frigate; and the same class of ship is often similarly designated by us. Most of these ships formerly mounted long guns upon the main-deck. One of the latter will be preferred; as the ship to which she is to be opposed, mounted on that deck long guns also. The Majestic, and the old 24-gun ship, respectively mounted as follows:

	Majestic.		Old 24-gun ship.
Main-deck	28 long	32 pndrs.	22 long 9 pndrs.
Quarter-deck and forecastle	1 —— brass	12 ——	2 —— 9 ——
	28 carr.	42 ——	8 carr. 18 ——
	1 ——	18 ——	1 —— 12 ——
Total....	58 guns.		33 guns.

Comparative force of two FRIGATES:

	Majestic.		Old 24-gun sh.
Broadside-metal in pounds	l. guns	460	108
	carr.	606	84
		1066	192
Complement of men and boys		500	175
Size in tons		1642	538

Formidable as is the Majestic's, for a frigate's, broadside, some of the new American "44s" mount two 32-pounders upon their main-decks, more than she does. There would be some propriety in rating such ships, as the Majestic was rated, at "58 guns;" but, is it not a burlesque upon the rating-system to rate them at "44 guns"?

The American Commodore Macdonough, absolutely called two British armed sloops of 110, and 102 tons "sloops of war." (See App. No. 91.) Without contrasting vessels of the sloop-of-war class, it will be sufficient to shew the dimensions of an American *corvette*, as well as what armament she was calculated to carry. The late Andromeda in our service, (now sold out,) was formerly the American ship Hannibal. Her dimensions were these:

	Ft.	In.	
Length on deck from rabbit to rabbit	129	7	Tons 812
Breadth extreme	37	5⅜	

The Andromeda's masts and yards were those of a 42-gun frigate. She was pierced for 28 guns; and, although she carried 32-pound carronades, might have been armed with twenty four 42s, and two long 18-pounders. She would then have thrown as heavy a broadside as a British 46-gun frigate, of the new rate. The Americans, during the late war, employed two corvettes, about the size of the Andromeda; one named the Adams; the other, the John Adams. They were both reduced from frigates; and the latter, it is believed, carried 42-pound carronades.

It has already been shewn, how totally inadequate the number of decks, as well as the rate, of a ship is, to determine her force and size. Difference in the mode of rigging vessels, constitutes a third distinction; and is one that, as

respects size particularly, may also lead to very erroneous conclusions.

Most people imagine, that a ship must be larger than a brig; and a brig than a schooner. The American brigs Jones and Jefferson, on Lake Ontario, are each 530 tons; and the Mammoth, privateer-schooner, was 406 (376 Am.) tons. His majesty's ship-packets are 180 tons; the brig of war Hunter, on Lake Erie, was 74 tons; and the schooner Chippeway, at the same place, 32 tons.

In action, a three-masted, has certainly an advantage over a two-masted vessel. If a brig's main-gaff is shot away, or her boom-main-sail otherwise rendered useless, she directly falls off from the wind, and exposes herself to a raking fire: whereas, if a similar accident befals a ship's spanker, the mizen-top-sail, or mizen-stay-sail, keeps her broadside to the enemy. In the engagements between our brig-sloops and the American ship-sloops, presently to be detailed, the truth of this will be manifest.

If, then, the reader wishes to understand thoroughly the merits of the several disputed cases, the elucidation of which is the sole object of the present work, he must not be biassed by ship's rates, number of decks, or other such equivocal distinctions, but must give his whole attention to each ship's *broadside-weight of metal*, *complement of men and boys*, and *size in tons*.

CHAPTER II.

War of 1776—*H. M. S. Glasgow and an American squadron—Nimrod and an American armed ship—Beaver and Oliver Cromwell—Yarmouth and Randolph—Cruel treatment of British prisoners of war—Ariadne and Ceres with the Raleigh and Alfred—Levant and General Hancock—Diligent and Providence—Serapis and Scarborough with squadron under Paul Jones—Savage and Congress—South Carolina American frigate—Anecdote of Captain Manly—Atalante and Trepassy with the Alliance—Sybil and Alliance—Gross amount of British and American captures.*

THE early pages of Mr. Clark's work, are devoted to the naval operations of the "revolutionary war." Almost every action in which a British armed ship was a party, is detailed with some circumstances to her disadvantage. As far as respects private-armed ships, it is hardly possible, at this day, to come at the truth; but, the proceedings of our public-armed ships being on record, from the earliest periods, the details of actions in which they have been concerned, will not be so difficult to procure.

At page 26 of his first volume, Mr. Clark informs us, that an American fleet, consisting of, "the Alfred, of 30 guns and 300 men; Columbus, of 28 guns and 300 men; Andrew Doria, of 16 guns and 200 men; Sebastian Cabot, of 14 guns and 200 men; and Providence, of 12 guns and 150 men," on their return from a successful expedition against the island of New Providence, fell in with H. M. S. Glasgow, of 20 guns, Captain Tyringham Howe, in company with a tender.—"The Cabot," says Mr. Clark, "being foremost of the squadron, bore down upon her. After exchanging broadsides, the Cabot was so much damaged in her hull and rigging, by the superior weight of the enemy's metal, as to be obliged to abandon the contest, and refit. The Alfred came next alongside, and continued a close engagement for an hour and a half. During the action, the Alfred had her tiller and main-braces shot away. At daybreak, the Glasgow, making all the sail she could crowd, stood in for Newport. The Cabot had four men killed, and seven wounded; the Alfred six killed, and six wounded; the Columbus one wounded. After this engagement the American fleet got safe into port. The escape of the Glasgow excited much displeasure against the commodore."

Captain *Schomberg** states this affair to have

* *Schomberg*'s Nav. Chronol. vol. i. p. 427.

happened on the 6th of April 1776; and that, so far from the Glasgow effecting her *escape*, she compelled this mighty squadron of American ships to "sheer off." She was much crippled in her masts and rigging; and had one man killed, and three wounded.

The Glasgow was 451 tons, and carried twenty long 9-pounders. The tender does not appear to have been armed. The Alfred and Columbus must have had either 9 or 12-pounders: the other three American vessels, 6-pounders.—What means Mr. Clark, then, by "the superior weight of the enemy's metal"?—A candid writer would have said—"the extraordinary precision of the enemy's fire." Some idea of what the Glasgow had to contend with, will appear by the numbers on each side: British force, 20 guns, 150 men; American force, 100 guns, 1150 men.

At page 39 of the same volume, Mr. Clark says—"In the month of September (1776) Captain Baird, commander of a Massachusett's armed ship, engaged the Nimrod, a British sloop of war, of 18 guns. After a severe action, the Nimrod struck her colours;"—and refers, for his authority, to two American miscellanies, the Remembrancer, and Pennsylvania Packet.

Passing over the circumstance of the armed ship's force being left to inference, it is sufficient to state, that neither this "severe action," nor the Nimrod's capture, can be found in *Schom-*

berg;—a work Mr. Clark admits of authority, by referring to it so often. But, in the navy-list for 1777, (the year *succeeding* the alleged capture,) the Nimrod's name appears, for the first time; and she is there stated to mount 14, instead of 18 guns.

At p. 51, we read,—"On the 11th of May (1777) the British sloop of war Beaver, of 14 guns and 125 men, fell in with an American privateer of superior force. After a smart action of three quarters of an hour, the privateer struck to the English vessel."—"*Schomberg's Naval Chronology*, vol. i. p. 436."—The passage quoted runs thus: "On the 18th of May, the Beaver sloop of war, of 14 guns and 125 men, commanded by Captain Jones, being on a cruize off St. Lucia, fell in with, and after a smart action of three quarters of an hour, captured the Oliver Cromwell, American privateer, of 24 guns, 10 swivels, and 10 cohorns, and 150 men, commanded by Captain Harman; 20 of whom were killed, and as many wounded. The Beaver had three men wounded. She was taken into the service, and named the Beaver's prize."

At p. 78, Mr. Clark recounts the blowing up of the American 32-gun frigate, the Randolph, while engaging the Yarmouth 64, at night; having mistaken her for a "large sloop with only a square-sail set."—"The British ship," says the account, "was the Yarmouth of 64

guns, commanded by Captain Vincent. She was very much disabled by the action. Her sails were all torn to pieces in a most surprising manner. She had five men killed, and twelve wounded. All the other vessels escaped from the Yarmouth; which continued a chase of several days after them."—For this, *Schomberg* is not cited, but an American miscellany of note, the "*Porte-folio*."

Captain *Schomberg* relates the same disastrous event thus:—"On the 7th of March, Captain Vincent, in the Yarmouth, of 64 guns, being on a cruize off the island of Antigua, about five o'clock in the evening, discovered and chased six sail. At nine, Captain Vincent came up with the largest, which, upon being hailed, hoisted American colours, and fired her broadside into the Yarmouth: she continued to engage for about twenty minutes, when on a sudden she blew up. Being very near to the Yarmouth, a great part of the wreck fell on board her, which cut her rigging and sails to pieces, killed five men, and wounded twelve others. On the 12th, Captain Vincent being in chase, saw a large piece of a wreck with four men on it; upon which he gave up the chase, and bore down to pick them up. They proved to be the only remaining part of the unfortunate crew of the ship which had blown up, while engaging the Yarmouth. These poor wretches had subsisted on

nothing but rain-water, which they had caught in a piece of an old blanket. Captain Vincent learnt from them, that the ship was the Randolph, American privateer, of 36 guns, and 305 men."

The American account, in the very next paragraph to that stating the Yarmouth's loss in sails and men, "*by the action*," says—"There were 315 persons on board the Randolph. When she blew up, it was fortunate for the Yarmouth that she was to-windward of her. Notwithstanding, she was covered with parts of the wreck. A large piece of timber, six feet long, fell on the poop. Another large piece struck her fore-top-gallant-sail." But, strange to say, not a word is there of a single man on the Yarmouth's decks having been hurt by this shower of spars, "six feet long."

To commemorate the "glorious event," a splendid oil-painting is still exhibited, shewing the Yarmouth, in size a three-decker, engaging the Randolph. The latter's consorts, (although one of them, the Moultrie of 20 guns, is admitted to have been closely engaged,) *may* be seen far off in the back-ground; the sails of the 64 are pierced with shot-holes; a top-gallant-yard is breaking in two; and a top-gallant-mast falling upon the deck. In short, the Yarmouth appears to have, by far, the worst of the action.

So much for representing that as having preceded, which actually followed, and was the consequence of, the Randolph's destruction.

According to a paragraph respecting the fitting out of this Randolph, it would appear that "British sailors" were among the sufferers on this melancholy occasion. Mr. Clark says:—"The difficulty of procuring American seamen, when the frigate was fitting out, obliged Captain Biddle to comply with the request of a number of British sailors, then prisoners, to be allowed to enter on board his vessel. While bearing away for Charleston, the English sailors, in conjunction with others of the crew, formed the design of taking the ship. When prepared, three cheers were given by them on the gun-deck. But, by the firm and determined conduct of the captain and his officers, the ringleaders were seized and punished. The rest submitted without opposition."

This brings to recollection, a circumstance related by an American loyalist, who is now a commissioned officer in his majesty's land-service. He stated, that he was confined, as a prisoner of war, in the jail of Philadelphia, during the first American war; and there frequently witnessed the taking by force of British prisoners to man the U. States' vessels, then lying in the Delaware. That, on one occasion, thirty or forty sailors, selected as the most effective,

were dragged forth; and that, on their comrades within-side joining in their loud execrations against the authors of such cruelty, the soldiers appointed to guard the men, in their march to the ships, fired into the prison-windows!

The fact of the "British sailors" on board the Randolph trying to regain their liberty, proves, pretty clearly, that, instead of their having "requested to enter," the American commander and his officers had, like the authorities on shore, employed coercive means.

At p. 85, vol. I. of the "Naval History," we read that,—"on the 9th of March (1778) the Alfred of 20 guns, was captured by the British vessels, Ariadne of 20 guns, and Ceres of 14." —"*Schomberg's Naval Chronology*, vol. i. p. 451."—Upon consulting the authority, the passage is found to run thus:—"On the 9th of March, the Ariadne of 20 guns, and the Ceres sloop of war, of 14 guns, commanded by Captains Pringle and Dacres, being on a cruize off Barbadoes, chased two American frigates. At noon they came up with one of them, which struck, after a short resistance. She proved to be the Alfred, of 20 guns, and 180 men. Her consort was the Raleigh, of 32 guns, which escaped."

The ship that escaped was afterwards captured by the Experiment, of 50 guns, and Unicorn, of 20 guns; and taken into the service as a 32-gun

frigate. No wonder Mr. Clark preferred being guilty of a false quotation, to disgracing his pages with the fact of the Raleigh having deserted her consort, when chased by two British ships; the largest of which was barely equal in force to the smallest of the American ships.

We next read (p. 87) of "the Levant, an English frigate, of 32 guns, commanded by Captain John Martin," being, on the 19th of September 1778, blown up in action with "the private-armed ship General Hancock, of Boston." The latter's force not mentioned. This loss does not appear in *Schomberg*. On the contrary, in his lists of the British navy, for 1777, 1778, and 1779, may be seen—"Levant, 28 guns, Captain Hon. G. Murray;" but the name "John Martin" no where appears among the post-captains, or commanders, in his majesty's navy. One of the last paragraphs in the American article, states, that the boatswain and seventeen men were saved; and that the crew "consisted of ninety seven seamen, exclusive of landsmen and boys."—The ship, therefore, was probably a British letter of marque; but evidently not, as alleged by Mr. Clark, "an English frigate of 32 guns."

At p. 96 is the following:—"In the month of May (1779) as the U. States' sloop of war Providence, of 10 guns, Captain Hoisted Hacker, was cruizing off Sandy Hook, she fell in with the

British sloop of war Diligent, of 12 guns. A severe action ensued, and lasted an hour and a half, when the British vessel struck to the American. The Providence had four men killed, and ten wounded."

According to *Schomberg*'s and *Charnock*'s lists, the Diligent mounted 10 guns, 3-pounders, was allowed 45 men, and measured 89 tons. Mr. Clark, in another part of his book, states the force of the Providence at twelve 4-pounders, and 90 men; and captured American vessels of 12 guns, at that time, were from 198 to 220 tons. This, therefore, was no capture of a superior British force, as the statement implies.

At p. 105 is given a highly exaggerated account of the loss of H. M. ships, the Serapis, of 44, and Scarborough, of 20 guns. These two ships, with 294, and 135 men, were captured, according to the official accounts, after a sanguinary action of nearly four hours, by that notorious renegado, Paul Jones, in Le Bon Homme Richard, of 40 guns, and 375 men; the Alliance, of 36 guns, and 300 men; le Pallas, of 32 guns, and 275 men; and the Vengeance brig, of 12 guns, and 70 men: altogether, 120 guns, and 1020 men, opposed to 64 guns, and 420 men.

At p. 125 is the following:—"In September, the British sloop of war Savage, of 20 guns, and about 150 men, cruized along the southern coast of the United States. She had proceeded up the

Potowmac, and plundered General Washington's estate. On the 6th of September, she was met off Charleston, by the privateer Congress, of the same force with herself. The Congress was commanded by Captain Geddes. Major M'Lane, a very distinguished partizan-officer of the American army, had, with a part of his command, volunteered to serve as marines on board her. As the crew of the Savage were all seamen, she had considerably the advantage of the Congress, the greater part of whose crew were landsmen. At half past ten, the Congress commenced firing her bow-chasers. At eleven, the action commenced with musketry; which, after much execution, was followed by a severe cannonade on both sides. The Savage, at the commencement of the engagement, had the advantage. She then lay on the Congress' bows, and raked her. But the latter succeeded in getting alongside the Savage, and soon disabled her so effectually that she could not manœuvre. An hour after the commencement of the action, all the braces and bow-lines of the Savage were shot away. Not a rope was left to trim the sails with. Her decks were cleared by the musketry of the Americans. The Congress continued alongside until accident obliged her to drop a-stern. The Savage was then almost a wreck; her sails, rigging, and yards, were so much injured, that it was with the utmost difficulty she could

change her position time enough to avoid being raked. The cannonading soon recommenced, with greater vigour than ever. The quarter-deck and forecastle of the Savage were, in a short time, again nearly cleared; almost every man stationed in these places being either killed or wounded. Three guns on the main-deck of the Savage were rendered useless. The fire from the guns of each ship, scorched the men opposed to them in the other. The mizen-mast of the Savage was shot away, and got entangled in the after-rigging of the Congress. The colours of both vessels were shot away, when the boatswain of the Savage appeared forward with his hat off, calling for quarters. As all the boats of the Congress had been destroyed by shot, it was half an hour before any of her crew could board the Savage. She was found to be a complete wreck. Her decks were covered with blood, and killed and wounded men. The victory was, in a great measure, due to the exertion and activity of Major M'Lane and his brave soldiers."

This very circumstantial account, to make it complete, wanted only, what the Americans are generally unwilling to communicate—the force of their own ship. Fortunately, that appears in *Schomberg*, vol. ii. p. 57. He there says,—"On the 6th of September, Captain Charles Sterling, in the Savage sloop of war, of 14 guns, and 125 men, being on a cruize off Charlestown, fell in

with, and was captured, after a furious and bloody conflict, by the Congress privateer, mounting 20 12-pounders, and four 6-pounders, with a complement of 215 men, commanded by Captain Geddes. Captain Sterling did not surrender the king's ship, until his mizen-mast was shot away, the main-mast in imminent danger of falling overboard, sveral of the guns rendered useless, 8 men killed, and 26 wounded. Among the former was the master, and among the latter were Captain Sterling, Lieutenant Shields, and 3 midshipmen."

Although the Congress was more than doubly superior to the Savage; (whose 14 guns were only 6-pounders;) yet, says the above candid historian, "the British sloop of war was captured by an American ship of the same force with herself."

At p. 138, is stated the capture, in the month of December, 1782, of the American frigate South Carolina, of 40 guns. *Schomberg*, the author cited, adds, "twenty-eight of which were 42-pounders on the main-deck, and twelve 12-pounders on the quarter-deck and forecastle, with a complement of 450 men, commanded by Captain Joiner. This frigate was built in Holland for the Americans: her length of keel was 160 feet."—It is not then in modern times only, that the Americans have employed frigates exceed-

ing in force and size, the frigates of any other nation.

To cap the climax of American heroism during the "revolutionary war," Mr. Clark, in the same page of his book, gives the following anecdote:—"In the month of September, Captain Manly*, who in the commencement of the war commanded the Hancock frigate, was appointed to the command of the U. States' frigate Hague, before called the Deane. Cruizing in the West Indies, he was chased by an English 74, and grounded on a sand-bank near Guadaloupe. Three ships of the line having joined the 74, they came to anchor within point-blank shot of the Hague. With springs on their cables, they opened a most tremendous fire. The American frigate supported this cannonade for three days. On the fourth she was got off, when, hoisting continental colours at the main-top-gallant-mast, she fired 13 guns as a farewell defiance. She arrived safe in Boston." The reader will recover himself a little when he finds that, for this wonderful escape from three days' "tremendous cannonade," by four ships of the line, within "point-blank shot," an "*American* Biographical Dictionary" is Mr. Clark's sole authority.

The "Naval History" contains, also, the ac-

* An Englishman, born in Torbay. Naval Chron. vol. xxxii. p. 274.

counts of the capture of two of our sloops of war by the American frigate Alliance, "of 32 guns," and of that ship's action with a British frigate of "equal force;" but as these actions are more circumstantially given in the "life of Commodore Barry," vol. ii. p. 1. of the American *Portefolio*, the latter will be consulted in preference.

The European reader will find it difficult to comprehend, how Mr. Barry, admitted to have been "born in Ireland," could be "an American hero;" or how an acknowledged traitor to his country, could be "the first of patriots and best of men." In American language, these terms are synonimous; unless, indeed, a native of the United States becomes a traitor. In that case, the words revert to their original meaning, and no crime is so heinous.

The Alliance, "of 36 guns," says the commodore's biographist, "sailed from L'Orient early in 1781, on a cruize; and, having taken many valuable prizes, on the 29th of May an event occurred that deserves notice. On the preceding day two sail were discovered on the weather-bow standing for the Alliance. The strange sails were discovered to be a ship and a brig; the British flag was displayed, and having, by means of their sweeps, got within hailing distance, they respectively hailed, when it ap-

peared that the ship was his Britannic majesty's ship of war Atalante, Captain Edwards, carrying *between* 20 and 30 guns, and her consort, the brig Trepasa, Captain Smith."—Then, the action is detailed; and that "at three P. M. they both struck their colours." The time at which the firing commenced is not stated; but, "about two o'clock, the commodore (Barry) was wounded in the shoulder by a grape-shot."

"Soon after the commodore was wounded and left the deck, one of his lieutenants went to him while in the cockpit, and, representing the shattered state of the sails and rigging, the number of killed and wounded, and the disadvantages under which they laboured, from the want of wind, desired to know if the colours should be struck. 'No,' said he, 'and if the ship can't be fought without, I will be carried on deck.' When the lieutenant made known to the crew the determination of their brave commander, fresh spirit was infused into them, and they, one and all, resolved to stick by him.

"The Alliance had 11 killed and 21 wounded; among the latter, several of her officers; her rigging and spars much shattered, and severely wounded in her hull. The enemy had the same number killed, and 30 wounded. We have been led into the detail of this victory, as it was considered at the time of its achievement, a most

brilliant exploit, and as an unequivocal evidence of the unconquerable firmness and intrepidity of the victor."

Here, then, the "unconquerable intrepidity" of an Irishman prevented the colours of an American ship from being struck. What renown, it may be asked, did the Americans gain by this? Suppose, even, the American lieutenant and his men had, without requiring to be stimulated by their Irish commander, effected the conquest, was the capture, or the defence, of these two sloops the most "brilliant exploit"?

Schomberg records the event thus:—"On the 28th of May, the Atalante sloop of war, of 14 guns, and 125 men, commanded by Captain Edwards, and the Trepassey, of 14 guns, and 80 men, Captain Smith, being on a cruize on the banks of Newfoundland, at noon on that day, were attacked by the Alliance, American frigate, of 40 guns, and 250 men. The sloops made a most determined and resolute defence; at one o'clock, Captain Smith, of the Trepassey, was killed. Lieutenant King, on whom the command devolved, continued the action with great gallantry for two hours longer. At this time, the Trepassey was a complete wreck, with 5 men killed, and 10 wounded, and the ship ungovernable; he was compelled to strike. Captain Edwards, in the Atalante, still maintained the action with uncommon bravery; but his an-

tagonist having no longer any other to contend with, compelled him also to surrender, with the loss of many men, and the ship dreadfully cut to pieces. Mr. Samuel Arden, her lieutenant, behaved with unexampled bravery, having lost his right arm in the action; the instant it was dressed, he resumed his station upon deck, and animated the men to fight gallantly, where he continued till the ship struck."*

Among the frigates captured from the Americans during the war of 1776, were two of 32 guns each, carrying long 18s and 12s; and one, the Bricole, sunk at Charleston in 1780, was pierced for 60, and mounted 44 guns, 24 and 18 pounders. The Alliance mounted 40 guns; consisting, it is believed, of twenty-eight long 18-pounders upon the main-deck, and twelve long 12-pounders upon the quarter-deck and forecastle. The American frigate, Confederacy, of 36 guns, and 300 men, captured in 1801, measured 959 tons; which may therefore be stated as the size of the Alliance.

The Atalante mounted 16 guns, 6-pounders, and measured 300 tons; the Trepassey 14 guns, 4-pounders, and measured 187 tons. The following, then, will shew the relative force of the two captured sloops and the American frigate; and decide which party in this contest was entitled to honors:

* Schomb. N. Chronol. vol. ii. p. 59.

	Atalante and Trepassey.	Alliance.
Broadside-metal in pounds (all long guns)	76	396
Complement of men and boys	205	250*
Size in tons	487	959

The next "brilliant exploit" of the same American frigate, is noted thus:—"The Alliance left L'Orient in February, 1782, from which time she continued cruizing with great success, till March of the following year; when, shortly after leaving Havannah, whither she had been ordered to bring to the United States a large quantity of specie, having in company the continental ship Luzerne, of 20 guns, Captain Green, three frigates were discovered right a-head, two leagues distant. The American vessels were hove about; the enemy gave chase. The Luzerne not sailing so fast as the Alliance, the commodore ordered the captain to throw her guns overboard. A sail was then discovered on her weather-bow, bearing down upon them. The Alliance hove out a signal, which was answered: she proved to be a French ship of 50 guns. Relying upon her assistance, the commodore concluded to bring the headmost of the enemy's ships to action; after inspiriting his crew by an address, and going from gun to gun, cautioning his men against too much haste, and not to fire till ordered, he prepared for action. The enemy's ship was of equal size with

* Short of her proper complement by 70 men, at least.

the Alliance: a severe engagement followed. It was very soon perceptible that the Alliance was gaining the advantage. Most of the enemy's guns were silenced; and after an action of fifty minutes, his ship was so severely damaged, that she hoisted a signal of distress, when her consorts joined her. The loss on board the Alliance was very trifling; 3 killed, and 11 wounded. The enemy's loss was severe; 37 killed, and 50 wounded. The other English frigates were watching the movements of the French ship; the captain of which, upon coming up with the Alliance, assigned as a reason for keeping aloof from the action, that he was apprehensive the Alliance had been taken, and that the engagement was only a decoy. Chase was made, but the French ship being unable to keep up with the American, it was given over.—A gentleman of distinguished naval reputation, when in the Mediterranean with the American squadron, was introduced to Captain James Vashon, esquire, now vice-admiral of the red, the commander of the British frigate engaged with the Alliance. In the course of conversation he made particular enquiry after Captain Barry, related the circumstance of the action, and, with the frankness of a generous enemy, confessed that he had never seen a ship so ably fought as the Alliance; that he had never before, to use his own words,

'received such a drubbing,' and that he was indebted to the assistance of his consorts."*

Neither *Schomberg*, nor any other British naval historian, mentions this engagement. By a little industry, however, the following facts have been obtained; and may be relied on. The "three frigates" consisted of the Alarm of twenty-six long 12, and six long 6 pounders, commanded by the late Sir Charles Cotton; the Sybil of twenty-four long 9, and four long 6 pounders, commanded by the present Admiral Vashon; and the Tobago of sixteen long 4-pounders, commanded by the present Vice-admiral Martin. It was to extricate the Luzerne, of twenty long 9-pounders, that the Alliance bore down upon, and engaged, the Sybil; which ship was, in a manner, detached from her consorts. The action was fought within half-musket shot distance; and continued about seventeen minutes, when the Alliance hauled on board her fore and main-tacks, and stood from her antagonist; whose great inferiority of sailing rendered pursuit useless. The Alarm and Tobago were still at a considerable distance; and, so far from the Sybil being "severely damaged," and losing "37 killed and 50 wounded," she received very little injury in hull, spars, or rigging, and lost but 2 men killed, and 7 or 8 wounded. If, therefore, Captain

* American Portefolio, vol. ii. p. 7.

Vashon made any signal, it must have been to acquaint his commanding officer, that the Sybil, alone, could manage the Alliance; thereby leaving the Alarm and Tobago at liberty to devote their attention to the French 50, and the American 20, gun ship, the friend and consort of the fugitive American frigate. It is almost needless to add, that the statement of this engagement, as given by Commodore Barry's biographist, including the alleged conversation between "Captain James Vashon, *esquire*," and the American "gentleman of distinguished naval reputation," is an entire fabrication.

To enable the reader fully to appreciate the gallant performance of the officers and crew of the Sybil, here follows the

Comparative force of the two ships:

	Sybil.	Alliance.
Broadside-metal in pounds (all long guns)	120	396
Complement of men and boys	200	320
Size in tons	594	959

A superiority, in weight of metal, of more than three to one, and in complement, of more than three to two, failed to give success; yet the American statement of the Alliance's two actions, concludes thus:—"We wish it to be understood, that the gallantry of our seamen is not of recent date, but is coeval with our national existence."

It is not simply by partial and fabricated ac-

counts of actions, that the Americans have reared from comparative insignificance, the "Naval History of the revolutionary war;" Mr. Clark devotes twenty pages of his book to a mere list of British captured vessels; while he compels the reader to wade through the whole, in search of the few captured American vessels, with the names of which his industry had supplied him. The writer's motives appear in the following comparative statement of the gross numbers of American and British armed vessels, captured or destroyed during the first American war; as extracted from *Schomberg*, vol. v. p. 11 and 52:

American armed vessels.	British armed vessels.
No. 85; guns, 1755.	No. 29; guns, 470.

CHAPTER III.

The United States and France—Constellation engages and captures l'Insurgent—A statement of the comparative force of the ships—Constellation engages la Vengeance—Is beaten off—La Vengeance refitted—Encounters the Seine—Is captured—Statement of the comparative force of the ships—Americans claim a victory for Commodore Truxton—Description of his medal presented in consequence—French account of the engagement with the American frigate — Remarks thereon—Leopard and Chesapeake—American accounts of it—Statement of the comparative force of the vessels—Little Belt and President—Americans at Tripoli—British deserters.

THE only naval occurrences that strictly come within the plan of the present work, are those that have taken place between the United States and Great Britain; but, as the Americans still attach considerable importance to the two "memorable naval victories," they pretend to have gained over the French, a cursory examination of the American accounts of those actions, may not be an unprofitable digression. It will then be seen, whether America has displayed more

moderation in recording her victories over France, to whose treasure and fleets she owed her independence, than she has in triumphing over us; to whom, it is admitted, she owes no extraordinary obligations.

The "Naval History" states that, on the 9th of February, 1799, the U. States' frigate Constellation, "of 36 guns," fell in with "a large ship" under French colours; that an action ensued, which lasted "one hour and a quarter," when the enemy struck, and proved to be l'Insurgent, "of 40 guns, and 417 men." Another American account fixes her complement at 340; but neither account mentions the nature of her armament.

This "brilliant victory" was echoed from one end of the union to the other; and a late American newspaper-puff, headed "Record of glory," recalls it to the public attention. It is of little consequence, whether the Constellation rated of "36 guns;" or, as Mr. Clark has made her, in his list of the American navy for the very year of the action, "of 44 guns:" the question is—what was her real force, as well as that of the frigate she captured?

A lieutenant of the Constellation, while, during the late war, she was lying in Norfolk, Virginia, blockaded by the British squadron, gave the following as her armament, at that period:—twenty-eight long 18-pounders upon the main-

deck, twenty carronades, 32-pounders, and two (English) long 24-pounders, bored to carry a 32-pound shot, upon the quarter-deck and forecastle; total 50 guns: exclusive of boat-carronade, and top-guns, if any.

But a gentleman who was frequently on board the Constellation, while she was in the West Indies, in the years 1799 and 1780, declares, that her main-deck battery then consisted, not of 18, but of 24 pounders. In confirmation of this, a New-York paper, of the end of 1800, or beginning of 1801, (the precise date not recollected,) announced the arrival there from a southern port, of the U. States' frigate Constellation, for the purpose of "*exchanging her* 24s *for* 18s." Therefore, long subsequently to both her "victories," the Constellation mounted 24-pounders upon the main-deck. It is believed, that the chief part of her spar-deck battery then consisted of long 12s, and that they were afterwards exchanged for carronades. To make allowance for that, ten of her twenty-two spar-deck guns will be considered as long 12s, and the remainder as 32-pound carronades.

The complement of the Constellation was 440 at least; and her size is described as about equal to that of the Endymion. At all events, she could not well have been less than 1250 tons.

The nature of l'Insurgent's guns no where appears. For some years subsequent to 1799,

when a French frigate was captured, with 18-pounders upon the main-deck, it was invariably so expressed in the official account. The generality of the French 40-gun frigates, carried 12-pounders; and were from 850 to 950 tons. To give every advantage to the Americans, let us suppose that l'Insurgent mounted twenty-six long 18-pounders upon the main-deck, and fourteen long 9-pounders upon the quarter-deck and forecastle; total "40 guns." The difference between an English and a French 18-pound shot, in diameter, is as 5,040 to 5,277; (inches and decimal parts;) and, in weight, as 18 to $20\frac{1}{4}$ pounds. So that, by adding one eighth to the nominal calibers of French guns, we have the weight of metal expressed in English pounds. The mean of the two American accounts of l'Insurgent's complement is 379. Her tonnage may be stated at 950.

Comparative force of the two ships:

	Constellation.		l'Insurgent.
Broadside-metal in pounds	l. guns	396	263
	carr.	192	71
		588	334
Complement of men and boys		440	379
Size in tons		1250	950

Had the Constellation captured, in one action, two such ships as l'Insurgent, the Americans could not have boasted more than they did upon this occasion. A disclosure of the real strength

of the parties, now shews, that the defence of the French frigate was highly creditable to her officers and crew.

The merchants of London, misled by the American statements, most of which were copied into the British journals, viewed the capture of l'Insurgent as a victory gained by an American, over a French frigate, greatly superior; and, acting with their accustomed liberality, subscribed for a piece of plate to be presented to Commodore Truxton. Had the rate of, and actual number of guns mounted by, a ship, meant the same thing, this "memorable victory" would have passed off without notice.

On the 1st of February, 1800, the Constellation fell in with, and engaged for upwards of three hours, the French frigate la Vengeance. Each party, as is usual in undecided cases, accused the other of "sheering off." At all events, the Constellation had her main-mast shot away; and was otherwise so greatly injured as to be compelled to bear up for Jamaica, to undergo the necessary repairs. Her loss in killed and wounded amounted to 39. La Vengeance was also much shattered, and lost a great many men. She afterwards put into Curaçoa, to get herself refitted. Commodore Truxton's account of this engagement, being deemed a *unique* piece of composition, will be found in the Appendix. (Nos. 1 and 2.)

On the 20th of August following, H. M. S. Seine, Captain (now Rear-admiral Sir) David Milne, fell in with, and after a long and sanguinary action, captured, this same la Vengeance; just from Curaçoa, where she had been completely refitted. The Seine was much cut up; and sustained a loss of 13 killed, and 29 wounded. La Vengeance was shattered almost to pieces; and, when carried into Jamaica, was thought not worth repairing. Her loss in the action, though not exactly ascertained, was known to have been very severe.

The Seine (captured from the French, June 29, 1798) mounted 42 guns: twenty-eight long 18-pounders upon the main-deck, and fourteen long 9-pounders upon the quarter-deck and forecastle. Her established complement consisted of 284 men and boys; and she measured 1146 tons.

La Vengeance mounted 52 guns: twenty-eight long 18-pounders upon the main-deck; sixteen long 12-pounders, and eight carronades, 42-pounders, upon the quarter deck and forecastle. Her complement was believed to be 453; but, as 291 men only were found on board, 390 will be an ample allowance. Captain Milne describes la Vengeance as "exactly of the dimensions of the Fisgard," taken from the French in 1797; and that ship was 1182 tons.

Comparative force of the two ships.

	Seine.		La Vengeance.
Broadside-metal in pounds,	l. guns, 315		391
	carr. 00		189
		315	580
Complement of men and boys,		284	390
Size in tons,		1146	1182

Here, evidently, a British frigate, of inferior force, captured a ship, which an American frigate, of at least equal force, was unable to capture; demonstrating that British, was, in this instance, more potent than American "thunder." —"Aye," say the Americans, "but la Vengeance struck her flag to the Constellation, only our commodore did not happen to know it."—Accordingly, it was so voted; and the honors of a conqueror,—a conqueror, too, over a "far superior force,"—were conferred upon the astonished Commodore Truxton. Nay, to silence all doubts, and perpetuate the "memorable victory," a medal was struck; of which an engraving may be seen in the first volume of the American Portefolio. Two ships are there represented, dismasted and much cut up; one, a complete two-decker, similar to the Majestic or Saturn, razees; the other, a small frigate. The reader may conjecture which ship is intended for the American.

As if to place this mock triumph in a still more ridiculous point of view, the French first

lieutenant assured a distinguished British naval officer, that la Vengeance, when she encountered the Constellation, was laden with sugar, and had casks stowed between her main-deck guns; a few only of which could be cleared for action in time; that the American frigate kept hanging upon the quarter of la Vengeance, and never came fairly alongside; that the latter lost all three masts; and, from having an inexperienced crew, was compelled to remain stationary for the best part of three days; during which time the American frigate, with her fore and mizen-masts standing, lay in sight, *to-windward*, but made no attempt to renew the action.

If such is the behaviour of the Americans to their friends the French, we cannot complain of being unjustly dealt with. In the utmost display of their exaggerating talents, the Americans, perhaps, seek less to disparage others, than to exalt themselves; and it ought to be some consolation to us, that "the language of truth is uniform and consistent;" and that "to depart from it safely, requires memory and discretion."

The editor of the "Naval History" cannot describe even the affair of the Leopard and Chesapeake, without his accustomed misrepresentation. After nearly a page of preliminary observations, he says:—"The Chesapeake was altogether in an unprepared state; her guns and

decks were lumbered with sails, cables, &c. and her men were not at quarters till the commencement of the attack. No opposition was made. The British commander continued pouring his broadsides into the undefended ship for about thirty minutes; when the Chesapeake having received considerable damage in her hull, rigging, and spars, she struck. She had 3 men killed, and 18 wounded."

Commodore Barron's letter is not noticed by Mr. Clark; although, on other occasions, American official letters are deemed unquestionable authority. It bears date, June 23d, 1807; states the Chesapeake's departure from Hampton roads; and then proceeds, as follows:—"Some time afterwards, we observed one of the two *line-of-battle* ships that lay off Cape Henry, to get under weigh, and stand to sea."—After mentioning the coming up of the Leopard, "one of the two *line-of-battle* ships," and the interchange of correspondence, the commodore says:—"About this time I observed some appearances of a hostile nature, and said to Captain Gordon, that it was possible they were serious, and requested him to have his men sent to their quarters." Then, after a few excuses about the lumbered state of his ship, he adds: "Consequently, our resistance was but feeble. In about twenty minutes, I ordered the colours to be struck."

Here, we see the reason why Mr. Clark rejected this letter. First, the men *were* sent to quarters before the commencement of the attack; secondly, resistance *was* made; and thirdly, the action *did not* continue "thirty minutes."

Now for the veracity of the commodore himself. Captain Humphreys of the Leopard, in his letter, says,—"At the expiration of *ten* minutes from the first shot being fired," (between which and the second, there was an interval of two or three minutes,) "the pendant and ensign of the Chesapeake were lowered." In another part, he says,—"a few shot were returned, but none struck this ship;"—and, by a letter from one of the Leopard's officers, it appears,—"three broadsides only were fired."

These three broadsides, according to the items in the numerous "surveys" held upon the Chesapeake, lodged twenty two round shot in her hull; irreparably injured the fore and main-masts; badly wounded the mizen-mast; cut away thirteen lower shrouds and stays; shattered the fore-sail, main-sail, main-top-sail, and fore-top-mast stay-sail; injured and rendered unfit for service a spare fore-top-mast, and another spare spar; and damaged two boats. —What a pity the Americans never gave such surveys during the late war!—In addition, as appears by her log-minutes, the Chesapeake

had three feet and a half water in the hold.—Three more such broadsides would have sunk her. And yet, the "Naval Monument" jeers us for having done so little injury to the ship.

Although sixty years are now elapsed since British 50-gun ships have been excluded from the line of battle, Commodore Barron found it convenient to make a "line-of-battle ship" of the Leopard, as the French captain, *Lejoielle*, had a 74 of the Leander; which ship happened (odd enough) to be the other "line-of-battle ship" mentioned in the commodore's letter.

The Leopard's armament, upon the lower and upper-decks, was precisely the same as mounted by other ships of her class; for which see p. 33. Upon her quarter-deck and forecastle, she mounted six carronades, 24-pounders, an 18-pound launch-carronade, and two long 9-pounders; total 53 guns: being six short of her established number. The Leopard had her full complement on board; consisting of 318 men, and 25 boys: she had also on board, as passengers, 10 artillery-men, and 3 midshipmen belonging to some of the ships on the coast.

The Chesapeake mounted, at this time, twenty eight long 18-pounders upon the main-deck, fourteen carronades, 32-pounders, (leaving a vacant port on each side,) upon the quarter-deck; two carronades, 32-pounders, and two long 12-pounders, (leaving three vacant ports on

each side,) upon the forecastle; total 46 guns. This was her peace-establishment. Her books bore the names of 440; but, among those, were 25 runnings and discharges: consequently, her actual complement consisted of 415; including 10 boys or lads. There were also several passengers on board, going to the Mediterranean. That the Chesapeake had, at least, five lieutenants, appears by the signature of her "5th lieutenant" to several of the official documents relating to the action. Nine men to every gun in the ship, would be considered as an extraordinary large complement, even in times of war.

Comparative force of the two ships.

		Leopard.	Chesapeake.
Broadside-metal in pounds,	l. guns,	405	264
	carr.	90	256
		495	520
Complement,	men,	331	405
	boys,	25	10
		356	415
Size in tons,		1044	1135

Many ships may meet at sea, and not be so equally matched as the Leopard and Chesapeake; although the latter *was* a "36-gun frigate," and the former a "50-gun ship:" which again shews the fallacy of the old rating system.

About four years subsequent to this event, the Americans thought fit to retaliate upon us. If a "line-of-battle ship" could attack a fri-

gate, why not a frigate attack a sloop of war? The President therefore engaged the Little Belt; and the Little Belt engaged the President; and manfully too: which, added to a real and a very great disparity of force, constitutes the distinguishing feature between the action of the Little Belt and President, and that of the Leopard and Chesapeake.

A proof of the accuracy and fairness with which the Americans record transactions between themselves and other nations, will be seen in the following extract from a Boston chronological work:—"October 11, 1811, offer of reparation made by the British government, and accepted, respecting the affair between the Little Belt and President."

The "Naval History" details, very fully, the operations before Tripoli, from 1801, to the peace concluded in June, 1805, between the bashaw and the president of the United States. Great credit is due to the officers and seamen belonging to the American ships, for the gallantry displayed on several occasions.

It is fresh in the recollection of many officers of the British navy, how difficult it was, at this period, to keep the seamen from deserting to the Americans. The short peace of 1803 occasioned many of our ships to be paid off; and the nature of the service upon which the Americans were engaged, held forth a strong inducement

to the manly feelings of the British tar. It was not to raise his arm against his own countrymen; but against barbarians, whose foul deeds excited indignation in every generous breast.

The Americans cannot deny, that the complements of their ships in the Tripolitan war, consisted chiefly of British seamen; supplied by a Scotch renegado at New York, and by numerous other crimps in the different sea-port towns of the United States: and that those complements were afterwards filled up, by similar means, at Cadiz and other ports of the Mediterranean.—Was not Commodore Preble, on account of being detected in some transaction of this sort, obliged to shorten his stay at Gibraltar, and to fix Syracuse, instead of Malta, for his next rendezvous?

To such as know the facility with which, either in the ships, or on the shores, of the United States, a deserter, or an emigrant, can obtain his naturalization, the term "American" requires an epithet to render it intelligible. In recording the exploits of "Americans," it is but to lop off the qualifying adjunct—"adopted," and every *native* reader feels a hero's blood flowing in his veins. On the other hand, should disgrace be attached to the deed, Mr. Clark, and his brother-writers, anticipating the reader's wishes, seldom fail to state, that the parties were not *American*, but *British* sailors.

CHAPTER IV.

United States of America declare war against Great Britain—Send a squadron in pursuit of the Jamaica-fleet—It falls in with, and chases, the Belvidera—Engagement between that ship and the President—Belvidera escapes—Squadron resumes its course after the convoy—Fails in overtaking it, and returns to Boston—Surprise of the Whiting in Hampton roads—Constitution is chased, and escapes—Capture of the Nautilus—Emulous and Gossamer—Alert attacks the Essex—Is captured—Force of the two vessels—Tar and feathering of a British seaman—Reported challenge from Sir James Lucas Yeo to Captain Porter—Essex and a "British frigate"—Essex and Shannon.

ON the 18th of June, 1812, the United States of America declared war against Great Britain; and orders were immediately dispatched from Washington, for the squadron that had been previously assembled at New York, to put to sea, for the capture or destruction of British vessels; and particularly, in search of a homeward-bound Jamaica-fleet, of eighty five sail,

then known to be weakly convoyed, and not far from the American coast.

On the 21st, which was as early as an express could arrive with the orders, sailed this American squadron; consisting of the President, Commodore Rodgers, United States, Commodore Decatur, Congress, Captain Smith, Essex, Captain Porter, Hornet, Lieutenant-commandant Lawrence, and Argus, Lieutenant-commandant Sinclair; mounting, altogether, upwards of 250 guns, and manned with 2000 choice seamen.

The same American brig that gave Commodore Rodgers intelligence (App. No. 6) of the Jamaica-fleet's being so near, had just been boarded by the British frigate Belvidera; whose exact position, therefore, was also pointed out. Chase was instantly made, in full hopes to effect these two important objects; and, on the morning of the 23d, a "large sail" was seen in the N. E. standing to the S. W. This was H. M. S. Belvidera, of 947 tons, mounting 42 guns; namely, twenty six long 18s, fourteen carronades, 32s, and two long 9s; and manned with 230 men and boys; her established number then being 274.

Captain Byron, at first, stood towards the American squadron; but, observing the ships suddenly to take in their studding-sails, and haul up in chase of him, frequently wetting

their sails to profit by the lightness of the wind, a suspicion of their hostile intentions caused him to tack, and stand off. By way of assuring the stranger, that they were the ships of a *friendly* power, the Americans hoisted their colours; but their evident anxiety to close had betrayed them, and the Belvidera continued her course.

As the leading ship of the squadron was fast approaching, Captain Byron, to prevent any question about who fired the first shot, ordered the priming to be wiped from every gun in the ship. Soon afterwards, the President fired those three well-directed shot, which occasioned the only loss the Belvidera sustained. (App. No. 5.) The Belvidera's guns were reprimed in an instant; and the fire returned from her four stern-chasers, two long 18s, and two 32-pound carronades; the only guns that would bear, or were fired at all: although the commodore's journal mentions, that the Belvidera fired her "four after main-deck guns on the starboard side." The full details of this interesting chase may be seen in the British and American accounts (Nos. 5. 6. and 7.) in the Appendix.

The fact of "the long bolts, breeching-hooks, and breechings, of guns and carronades, frequently breaking" on board the Belvidera, proves that there was some defect in the mode of securing them. This was not the fault of the

officers and men: they every time repaired the accident as quickly as possible. Had the whole of the broadside-guns come into use, a repetition of such an accident would have been a serious evil; as it was, the Belvidera's captain got severely wounded.

The guns of the Belvidera were mostly pointed by her officers; with what precision appears in the commodore's account of the damages which the President sustained. Her loss, exclusive of the 22 by the bursting of the gun, was 6 killed and wounded; making 28 in all. For three days, the ships were employed in repairing the President's damages; a delay that, no doubt, saved the Jamaica-fleet; the loss of which would have been a severe national blow.

The Belvidera's officers insist, that the President could have got alongside several times; but that, just as they were about to fire their broadside, she yawed across their stern, and fired her broadside. This occasioned her to lose way, until she resumed her course; when she gradually advanced to the same spot, and then repeated the same extraordinary manœuvre.

Comparing the force of the Belvidera, with that of the President, (for which see her name in the *Index*,) even alone, it is hard to conjecture which party Captain Hull intended to compliment, when, in his letter (App. No. 4.) transmitting the log-extract, he said: "I am confi-

dent, could the commodore have got alongside the Belvidera, she would have been his in less than *one hour*."

After quitting the chase of the Belvidera, and repairing the damages sustained by her fire, the American squadron proceeded in search of the convoy. On the 1st of July, a little to the eastward of Newfoundland-bank, the squadron fell in with a fleet of "cocoa-nut-shells, shaddock-rinds, orange-peels, &c." and the commodore and his officers promised themselves a West-India desert to their next day's dinner. They longed in vain; and, after being thus tantalized from the 1st to the 13th, they steered for Madeira; thence for the Azores; and finally arrived at Boston on the 29th of August. What encreased the misfortune of the cruize, the scurvy broke out among the men; and conferred additional value upon the limes that were known to be in such profusion on board the Jamaica ships.

To the discretion and promptitude of Captain Byron, on his first falling in with the American squadron; to the skill of the Belvidera's officers and crew in pointing their guns, and working the ship; and to their bravery and perseverance in defending her, during a long and arduous chase, while engaged with a force so greatly superior, is the nation indebted for the little mischief done to British commerce, by a formi-

dable American squadron; possessing the singular advantage of its hostile intentions being wholly unknown.

On the 8th of July, H. M. schooner Whiting, Lieutenant Maxey, from Plymouth, with dispatches for the American government, arrived in Hampton roads, ignorant of the war. As Lieutenant Maxey was proceeding on shore in his boat, the Dash privateer, Captain Garroway, bound on a cruize, got possession of him; and then ran alongside the Whiting; and, having upwards of 80 men in crew, captured her, without opposition. The dispatches had been sunk.

The Whiting was only 75 tons, mounting four carronades, 12-pounders; with a complement of 18 men and boys. Of these, a third were absent in the boat; and those in the schooner had not the least suspicion of being in an enemy's waters.

The Dash mounted one heavy long gun upon a pivot-carriage. This, and a suppression of the principal circumstances, enabled the American editors to state, with some degree of exultation: — "The British schooner mounts four guns, the Dash only one."—The Whiting was afterwards restored.

On the 12th of July, the U. S. ship Constitution, Captain Isaac Hull, sailed from Chesa-

peake-bay. On the 17th, in a calm, she fell in with H. M. ships, Africa 64, Shannon and Guerriere 46, Belvidera 42, and Æolus 38,* under the orders of Captain Broke, of the Shannon. Two of the frigates, (one the Belvidera,) assisted by the boats of the squadron, got, for a short time, within gun-shot; but the Constitution, by kedging, and other skilful manœuvres, effected her escape, after an anxious chase of sixty four hours. The Belvidera's situation, when chased, was far more critical; owing to Captain Byron's ignorance of the war, and his having to sustain the fire of a ship of nearly double his own force.

On the 16th of July, the U. S. brig Nautilus, Lieutenant Crane, of 14 guns, and 106 men, was captured by H. M. S. Shannon, and others. She was afterwards fitted with sixteen 24-pound carronades, and commissioned as a cruizer.

On the 30th of July, the American privateer-brig Gossamer, of 14 guns, and 100 men, surrendered to H. M. brig Emulous, Captain Mulcaster, without firing a shot. This is introduced by way of illustrating the following remark of an American editor:—"Instances of the bold and daring intrepidity of the crews of the private-armed vessels of the United States, are so

* All according to the new rates; which will be observed throughout the work.

numerous, that the recital of them would swell the work, &c."

On the 13th of August, 1812, H. M. S. Alert, Captain T. L. P. Laugharne, bore down upon the U. S. frigate Essex, Captain David Porter; mistaking her for a vessel of less force. An action ensued, which continued, the American account says, eight minutes; when the Alert, having seven feet water in the hold, and three men wounded, surrendered. Captain Porter says the Essex sustained no loss. The British official account not having been published, these facts rest wholly on the American statements.

The Alert mounted, according to the American papers announcing her capture, twenty carronades, 18-pounders; and, according to the number paroled out of her, had a complement of 86 men and boys.

Mr. Clark first gives the Alert "20 guns;" but, in a subsequent page, she appears as—"ship Alert, guns mounted 26." And as to her complement, the "Naval Monument," and the "Sketches of the War," have both made it 130. Although Captain Porter could not find room in his letter, to give the force of his prize, either in guns or men, he could, to make the false assertion, that "the Alert was out for the purpose of taking the Hornet."

The Essex, when subsequently captured,

mounted twenty four carronades, 32-pounders, and two long 12-pounders, upon the main-deck; sixteen carronades, 32-pounders, and four long 12-pounders, upon the quarter-deck and forecastle; total 46 guns: a tolerable armament for a "32-gun frigate."

Captain Porter, in his "Journal of a Cruize," says the Essex had, when lying in the Delaware, in October, 1812, a complement of 328 men; of whom eleven only rated as landsmen.

The Alert was originally a *collier*, named the Oxford, purchased by government in 1804. Whether her original employment were not that for which she was best calculated, may appear from the following fact. The first time the "U. S. ship of war Alert" was trusted at sea, was, after the peace; when, as a store ship, she accompanied the frigate United States to the Mediterranean. The American papers jocosely remarked, that the Alert required every stitch of canvass set, to enable her to keep way with the United States, under her three top-sails. During the war, she remained as a *block-ship* at New York; yet Mr. Clark, to give importance to her capture, says:—"The Alert, upon her return to the United States," from Newfoundland, whither she had been sent by Captain Porter, as a cartel, "was fitted out as a government-vessel."

Along with the dimensions of the Alert and

Essex, will be given the Southampton's, because Captain Porter's friends have contrived to connect her, in some degree, with the transactions of the Essex.

Dimensions of the three ships.

	Alert.		Essex.		Southampton.	
	Ft.	In.	Ft.	In.	Ft.	In.
Length of lower-deck, from rabbit to rabbit,	105	0	138	7	124	4
Breadth, extreme,	29	4	37	8½	35	0

The Southampton's armament has been fully described at page 24. Her force, for the reasons just given, will appear in the same statement with that of the Essex and Alert.

Comparative force of the three ships.

		Alert.		Essex.		Southampton.	
Broadside-metal in pounds,	l. guns,	0		36		168	
	carr.	180		640		132	
			180		676		300
Complement,	men,	77		325		200	
	boys,	9		3		21	
			86		328		221
Size in tons,			393		867		671

Here is seen the value of the exploit which Captain Porter did perform, as well as of that which he would have performed, had the Essex met, and captured, the Southampton.

Shortly after the declaration of war, Captain Porter ill-used a British subject, for refusing to fight against his country. A New York paper,

of June 27, 1812, gives the following account of the transaction:—

"The deposition states, that John Erving was born in Newcastle-upon-Tyne, England; that he has resided within the United States since 1800, and has never been naturalized; that on the 14th of October, 1811, he entered on board the Essex, and joined her at Norfolk; that Captain Porter, on the 25th of June, 1812, caused all hands to be piped on deck, to take the oath of allegiance to the United States, and gave them to understand, that any man who did not choose to do so should be discharged; that when deponent heard his name called, he told the captain, that being a British subject he must refuse taking the oath; on which the captain spoke to the petty-officers, and told them they must pass sentence upon him; that they then put him into the petty launch, which lay alongside the frigate, and there poured a bucket of tar over him, and then laid on a quantity of feathers, having first stripped him naked from the waist; that they then rowed him ashore, stern foremost, and landed him. That he wandered about, from street to street, in this condition, until Mr. Ford took him into his shop, to save him from the crowd then beginning to gather; that he staid there until the police-magistrate took him away, and put him in the city-prison for protection, where he was

cleansed and clothed. None of the citizens molested or insulted him. He says he had a protection, which he bought of a man in Salem, of the same name and description with himself, for four shillings and sixpence, which he got renewed at the custom-house, Norfolk. He says he gave, as an additional reason to the captain, why he did not choose to fight against his country, that, if he should be taken prisoner, he would certainly be hung."

This, having been copied into other papers, met the eye of Sir James Lucas Yeo, commanding the Southampton, then attached to the Jamaica-station. Persons acquainted with that officer, can judge of his feelings upon reading an account of the ill-treatment of a British sailor. Some expressions, marking his abhorrence of the act, and his contempt for the author, did very likely escape Sir James; and that, in the hearing of some of the American prisoners then on board the Southampton.—Through this channel, which was none of the purest, the words probably became what they appeared in the "Democratic Press," (a Philadelphia paper,) of the 18th of September, 1812. Thus:—"A passenger of the brig Lion, from Havannah to New York, captured by the frigate Southampton, Sir James Yeo, is requested to present his compliments to Captain Porter, commander of the American frigate Essex,

would be glad to have a *tête à tête*, any where between the capes Delaware and the Havannah, where he would have the pleasure to break his own sword over his damned head, and put him down forward in irons."

"Captain Porter, of the U. S. frigate Essex, presents his compliments to Sir James Yeo, commanding his B. M. frigate Southampton, and accepts with pleasure his polite invitation. If agreeable to Sir James, Captain Porter would prefer meeting near the Delaware, where Captain P. pledges his honor to Sir James, that no American vessel shall interrupt their *tête à tête*. The Essex may be known by a flag, bearing the motto, "*Free trade and sailors' rights;*" and when this is struck to the Southampton, Captain Porter will deserve the treatment promised by Sir James."

Leaving Captain Porter's *deserts* out of the question, the whole of this farrago has been ascribed to some of the war-party, who wished to give the "gallant captain" an opportunity of publicly testifying his readiness to engage "an equal force." Although no such message was sent by Sir James Yeo, he cruized, for several weeks, along the southern coast of the United States, in hopes of falling in with the Essex, the nature of whose armament was fully known to him. The Southampton was well manned, and all that her officers and crew

wanted, was the weather-gage, or an opportunity of getting on board the American, early in the action.

Captain Porter being a great favorite at Washington, Mr. Clark could do no less than give insertion to any little tale he might wish to see recorded in the "Naval History" of his country. One of them is as follows:—

"On the 30th of August, the Essex being in lat. 36° N. long. 62° W. a British frigate was discovered standing towards her, under a press of sail. Porter stood for her under easy sail, with his ship prepared for action; and, apprehensive that she might not find the Essex during the night, he hoisted a light. At 9, the British vessel made a signal: it consisted of two flashes, and a blue light. She was then, apparently, about four miles distant. Porter stood for the point where she was seen until midnight, when, perceiving nothing of her, he concluded it would be best to heave-to for her until morning, concluding she had done the same; but, to his great surprise, and the mortification of his officers and crew, she was no longer in sight. Captain Porter thought it to be not unlikely that this vessel was the Acasta, of 50 guns, sent out, accompanied by the Ringdove, of 22, to cruize for the Essex."

It did not, perhaps, occur to Mr. Clark, that ships usually carry log-books, in which are en-

tered every day's proceedings, with the latitude, longitude, &c.; and that these can, at any time, be referred to, in case the false assertions of any historian, or paragraph-writer, may be worth the trouble of disproving.

Considering what a formidable man Captain Porter was, nothing less than the "Acasta, of 50 guns," and "Ringdove, of 22," could be "sent out to cruize for the Essex." Unfortunately for her commander's fame, on the 30th of August, 1812, the day mentioned, the Acasta was cruizing in lat. 43° N. long. 65° 16′ W.; and the Ringdove lying at single anchor in St. Thomas's. Was not the "British frigate," the Rattler, of 16 guns?

The next occasion upon which Captain Porter was baulked of a battle, is recorded thus:—

"On the 4th of September, the Essex being off the tail of St. George's bank, two ships of war were discovered to the southward, and a brig to the northward. The brig was in chase of an American merchant-ship. Porter immediately chased the brig, which attempted to pass, and join the rest of the squadron. This he prevented, and compelled her to stand to the northward. He continued in chase of her, until a-breast of the American ship; when, the wind becoming light, she escaped by means of her sweeps. On shewing American colours, several signal-guns were fired by the ships to

the southward. All sail was made by them in chase. At 4 P.M. they had gained the wake of the Essex, and were coming up with her very fast. Calculating on making his escape by some manœuvre, during the night, he fired a gun to-windward. The two ships still continued to gain on the Essex. The largest was considerably to-windward of the other, and about five miles a-stern of the Essex. Captain Porter determined to heave about, as soon as it grew dark; and, in case he should not be able to pass her, he determined to fire a broadside into her, and lay her on board. Every preparation was made for this purpose. The crew, as soon as the plan was proposed to them, gave three cheers, and were in high spirits. At 20 minutes after 7, the Essex hove about, and stood S. E. by S. until 30 minutes after 8, when she bore away S.W. without seeing any thing more of them. This was the more extraordinary, as a pistol was fired on board the Essex when nearest to them. The Essex arrived safe in the Delaware a few days afterwards." (Nav. Hist. vol. i. p. 180.)

The same event finds a place in the "Sketches of the War." There the port, from which Captain Porter was "cut off by the two large ships of war," is mentioned to have been New York. The intention to lay one of the British ships on board is deservedly noticed; and, it is added,

that the Essex effected her escape into the bay of Delaware, " without the loss of a man."

One of the above " two ships of war" was the Shannon, Captain Broke; the other the Planter, a re-captured West Indiaman, her prize, and by no means a vessel to be mistaken for a " ship of war." But the best way to expose the Essex, and her *gallant* commander, will be, to detail the occurrence in the very words of one of the Shannon's officers.

" At noon, on the 4th of September, 1812, in lat. 39° 11′ N. long. 70° 22′ W. the Shannon had in company the re-captured ship Planter, when we saw a warlike-looking ship to the eastward, and chased towards her under all sail before the wind; but it headed us flat a-back. We observed a merchant-ship close to the chase, as if in the act of speaking. The two ships then, having a fresh breeze aft, came down upon us, the merchantman close a-stern of the ship of war; which, at 4. 30. P.M. then about 10 or 12 miles distant, hauled up, and made private signals; too far to be comprehended, had she been a friend. The strange ship then made every exertion to escape, leaving her merchant-ship behind, as we did our's; and having found, by keeping her wind some time, that she sailed nearly equal to us, she slanted off free, a point or two, so as to bring us into her wake, without allowing us to gain upon her in distance, or but

very slightly. Her object appeared to be, to get in between us and the land. On our losing sight of her at dark, she was still above 10 miles off. Being well aware that she would alter her course in the dark, and seeing her good sailing, there appeared no chance of getting hold of her; and her merchant-ship being now near us, we tacked and seized her, intending to burn her directly, that the fugitive ship might see the flames; but it became so dark and squally, that Captain Broke would not risk the boats in getting out her people; consequently the ship was not burnt till next morning. She was a light American ship, from Cadiz, named the Minerva; and her people informed us, that the ship we had been chasing was the U. S. frigate Essex, Captain Porter, whom they had spoken the same day. During the night the ships lay-to; and, to prevent separation, each kept bright lights up, and several blue-lights were burnt."

One of Mr. Clark's good-natured critics describes the object of such a work as his to be —" to commemorate the glories of the American age and nation; to place some of its most illustrious heroes out of the reach of oblivion; and to consecrate their actions to imperishable fame." (N. Hist. vol. i. p. 1.)!!!

CHAPTER V.

Inactive state of the British navy since the battle of Trafalgar—Its effects upon the officers and men—Polishing system reprobated—Scarcity of oak-timber and seamen—Contract-ships—Impressed crews—Foreigners and ineffective hands—American navy considered—Their ships easily manned—Practical gunnery—American marines—Opposite feelings of British and American officers towards each other—Guerriere falls in with, and engages the Constitution—Details of the action—Guerriere surrenders—Her damage—Final destruction—Loss of men—Constitution's damage—Loss—Force of each ship particularized—Statement of comparative force—Remarks thereon—British and American frigates—Their comparative dimensions and force—The latter compared in force with other classes of British ships—French frigates—Concluding remarks.

FROM the battle of Trafalgar to the peace of 1815, three-fourths of the British navy, at sea, were constantly employed in blockading the fleets of their enemies. Of the remainder, such as escaped the dull business of convoying, cruized about; but the only hostile ships that

in general crossed their tracks, were disguised neutrals; from whom no hard knocks could be expected. Once a year or so, the capture of a French frigate by a British one, gave a momentary fillip to the service.

A succession of insipid cruizes necessarily begat, among both officers and men, habits of inattention. The situation of gunner on board our ships, became almost a sinecure. A twenty years' war, of itself, was sufficient to wear out the strength of our seamen; but a laxity of discipline, in all the essentials of a man-of-war's-man, produced a much more sensible effect.

Instead of the sturdy occupation of handling the ship's guns, now seldom used but on salutes, the men were taught to polish the traversing-bars, elevating-screws, copper on the bits, &c. by way of ornament to the quarter-deck. Such of the crew as escaped this menial office, (from the unnecessary wear it occasions, lately forbidden by an order of the board of admiralty,) were set to reeving and unreeving the top-sails, against time, preparatory to a match with any other of his majesty's ships that might happen to fall in company.

Many were the noble exceptions to this, and many were the commanders who, despising what was either finical or useless, and still hoping to signalize themselves by some gallant exploit, spared no pains, consistent with their

limited means, and the restraints of the service, to have their ships, at all times, as men of war should be, in *boxing trim.*

As Napoleon extended his sway over the European continent, the British navy, that perpetual blight upon his hopes, required to be extended also. British oak, and British seamen, alike scarce, contract-ships were hastily built up, with soft wood and light frames; and then, manned with an impressed crew, chiefly of raw hands and small boys, sent forth to assert the rights, and maintain the character of Britons, upon the ocean. In June, 1812, when the war with America commenced, the British navy consisted of 746 ships, in commission. Had these been cleared of all the foreigners and ineffective hands, how many ships would the remainder have properly manned?

To the long duration of the war, and the rapid encrease of the navy, may be added a third cause of the scarcity of seamen: the enormous encrease of the army. In December, 1812, we had, in regulars alone, 229,149 men. How many frigates could have been manned, and well manned too, by draughts from the light dragoons, and the light infantry regiments? Nor is there a question,—so inviting were the bounties,—that *prime seamen* have enlisted in both.

The crews of our ships experienced a fourth reduction in strength, by the establishment,

about six years ago, of the battalion-marines: a corps embodied for the purpose of acting on shore, in conjunction with the seamen and marines of the ships. The battalion-marines, about 2000 in number, consisted of the *pick* of the royal marines; which accordingly became reduced to weak, under-sized men, and very young recruits. Marines ought to be among the stoutest men in the ship; because, until engaged in close action, their station is at the guns; where great physical strength is required. Except on a few occasions in Canada, and the Chesapeake, the battalion-marines, although as fine a body of men as any in the two services, have remained comparatively idle.

The canker-worm that, in the shape of neglect, had so long been preying upon the vitals of the British navy, could not exist among the few ships composing the navy of the United States. America's half a dozen frigates claimed the whole of her attention. These she had constructed upon the most approved principles, both for sailing, and for war. Considering that the ramparts of a battery should have, for one object, the shelter of the men stationed at it, she had built up the sides of her ships in the most compact manner; and the utmost ingenuity had been exerted, and expense bestowed, in their final equipment.

With respect to seamen, America had, for

many years previous to the war, been decoying the men from our ships, by every artful stratagem. The best of these were rated as petty-officers. Many British seamen had entered on board American merchant-vessels; and the numerous non-intercourse and embargo bills, in existence at different periods, during the four years preceding the war, threw many merchant-sailors out of employment. So that the U. S. ships of war, in their preparations for active warfare, had to pick their complements from a numerous body of seamen.

Highly to the credit of the naval administration of the United States the men were taught the practical rules of gunnery; and ten shot, with the necessary powder, were allowed to be expended in play, to make one hit in earnest.

Very distinct from the American seamen, so called, are the American marines. They are chiefly made up of natives of the country; and a deserter from the British would here be no acquisition. In the United States, every man may hunt or shoot among the wild animals of the forest. The young peasant, or *back-woodman*, carries a rifled-barrel gun, the moment he can lift one to his shoulder; and woe to the duck or deer that attempts to pass him, within fair range of his piece. To collect these expert marksmen, when of a proper age, officers are sent into the western parts of the Union; and

to embody and finish drilling them, a marine-barrack is established near the city of Washington: from which depôt, the ships are regularly supplied.

No one act of the little navy of the United States, had been at all calculated to gain the respect of the British. First, was seen the Chesapeake allowing herself to be beaten, with impunity, by a British ship, only nominally superior to her. Then, the huge frigate President attacks, and fights for nearly three quarters of an hour, the British sloop Little Belt. And, even since the war, the same President, at the head of a squadron, makes a bungling business of chasing the Belvidera.

While, therefore, a feeling towards America, bordering on contempt, had unhappily possessed the mind of the British naval officer, rendering him more than usually careless and opiniative, the American naval officer, having been taught to regard his new foe with a portion of dread, sailed forth to meet him, with the whole of his energies roused. A moment's reflection assured him, that his country's honour was now in his hands; and what, in the breast of man, could be a stronger incitement to extraordinary exertions?

Thus situated were the navies of the two countries, when H. M. S. Guerriere, with damaged masts, a reduced complement, and in

absolute need of that thorough refit, for which she was then, after a very long cruize, speeding to Halifax, encountered the U. S. ship Constitution, seventeen days only from port, manned with a full complement; and, in all respects, fitted for war.

An action ensued, the full details of which are given in the different official papers to be found in the Appendix. (Nos. 8. 9. 10. 11. and 12.) Captain Dacres says, the Constitution commenced returning his fire "at twenty minutes past four;" the American "Particulars" say, "at twenty minutes past five;" and that the Constitution from that time "continued to fire occasionally," until she closed the Guerriere "at five minutes past six." Captain Hull says:—"At five minutes before six P. M. being alongside, within pistol-shot, we *commenced* a heavy fire from all our guns;"—and he has had art enough to compute the duration of the action from that time. Were his long 24-pounders, which, during the preceding thirty five minutes, he "continued to fire occasionally at the Guerriere," loaded with blank-cartridge? Why, if the American commander had no desire to keep at long shot until he had disabled his opponet, did he not bear down sooner; he had the weather-gage?

The early fall of the Guerriere's mizen-mast brought the ship up in the wind, and exposed

her to a dreadful raking fire, as well as to the riflemen in the Constitution's tops, who levelled their pieces, with full effect, at the Guerriere's officers and men.—It may be necessary to explain how the loss of the mizen-mast could bring the ship up in the wind. The wreck of the mast hung over the weather-side; the top, from its position, acting as a complete back-water, so as to bring the ship's head up to the wind, in spite of every effort of the helmsman. By those acquainted with the peculiar construction of French-built ships, about the *fore-foot* especially, this will be readily understood.

Upon the Guerriere's bowsprit getting foul of the Constitution's larboard quarter, the Americans attempted to board, but were driven back; and it was not till after the two ships had got clear, and some of the Guerriere's bow-guns were brought to bear, that the fore and main-masts fell over the side. Yet the "Particulars," rather than state what might shew, that the Constitution's men were afraid to board the Guerriere, say thus:—"We prepared to board, but immediately after, his fore and main-masts went by the board, and it was deemed unnecessary." The "Sketches of the War" explains this by stating, that the American lieutenant of marines who headed the party, was killed by a musket-shot. Captain Hull is silent about the boarding; but, in stating that

the Constitution "ceased firing" upon the falling of the Guerriere's fore and main-masts, tacitly admits, that the two ships were, at that moment, clear of each other; and consequently, that the boarding-opportunity had already passed. The American crew, therefore, were not restrained from boarding, because,—owing to the falling of the Guerriere's fore and main-masts, "it was deemed unnecessary."—They made the attempt, and were repulsed, with the loss of their boarding-officer.

Several of the Guerriere's guns and carronades broke loose, owing to rotten breechings, as well as the rotten state of the timbers, through which the long-bolts passed. The Guerriere had suffered so much from bad weather, and cruized so long without renewing her stores, that there was no rope left, wherewith to repair the loss of breechings. Those of the guns and carronades that escaped breaking loose, were completely disabled by the fall of the fore and main-masts. The Guerriere, now a complete wreck, was rolling her main-deck guns in the water, when, "at 6. 45." by the British account, the jack was lowered from the stump of the mizen-mast; and, at seven o'clock, the Constitution took possession of her prize.

Taking the mean of the two accounts, as to the time when the Guerriere commenced firing, the duration of the action was two hours and

twelve minutes. Yet Mr. Clark, putting his own construction upon the obscure paragraph in Captain Hull's letter,—"so that, in thirty minutes after we got fairly alongside the enemy, she surrendered,"—informs his readers, that the Guerriere was captured "after a very short action."

Among other passages in Captain's Hull's letter, which are not very clear, may be noticed the following: "But, on our coming within gun-shot, she gave us a broadside, and filled away, and wore, giving us a broadside on the other tack, but without effect, her shot falling short."—This can only be explained by the circumstance of the Guerriere's powder being much deteriorated by damp and long-keeping. Robins says the action of damp powder is diminished, "according to the degree of moisture with which it is impregnated;" and that powder, to produce its proper effect, must be "in good condition at the time of using." Some very late experiments have also shewn, that the powder used by our ships in general will not project a shot, by any means so far as powder taken out of Walker's patent-barrels. That the Constitution's powder was of the very best sort, and in the most perfect state, the pains taken in her equipment, and her recent departure from a home-port, place beyond a doubt. Having also 24-pounders opposed to 18s, "within gun-shot"

to her, might have been a trifle "out of gun-shot" to the Guerriere.

The Guerriere was greatly shattered in her hull; so much so, that, in spite of all the efforts of the Americans, she, at day-light on the morning succeeding the action, was in a sinking condition. The people were removed from her, as quickly as possible; and, at a quarter past three in the afternoon, the Guerriere blew up: an irrefragable proof, that Captain Dacres, his officers and crew, had defended her to the last extremity.

The Guerriere's fore-mast fell from the Constitution's shot; aided perhaps by the absence of most of the shrouds on one side. It was not, altogether, Captain Hull's "round and grape," that led to its fall; but a brass swivel, fired from one of the Constitution's forecastle guns. The main-mast had been struck by lightning some months previous to the action; and fell by the mere weight of the fore-mast. It was comparatively uninjured by shot; but, as seen by the crews of both ships, was perfectly rotten in the centre. When it is added, that the bow-sprit had long been sprung, it will not be too much to say, that the Guerriere, at the time she engaged the Constitution, was, if not crippled, defective at least, in her masts and rigging.

The Guerriere's loss in the action was severe. One lieutenant out of two, and 14 men, were

killed; 17 men, dangerously, her commander, master, two mates, and 15 men, severely, and the first lieutenant, a midshipman, 15 men and one boy, slightly wounded; total, killed and wounded, 78. About six died of their wounds. Mr. Clark has made no scruple of placing opposite to the Guerriere's name, "British loss, 105;" including, perhaps, the "missing" at the end of Captain Hull's letter. As if to put the matter beyond a doubt, he has also taken care to have represented, in the brilliant view of the action forming the frontispiece to his work, several men struggling upon the Guerriere's spars, as they float in the water; although not a man was on either of her masts, when they fell, or was lost in any other way than by the fire of the Constitution.

Captain Hull mentions, in his letter, having sent a "report of the damages" sustained by the Constitution; but his government has not thought fit to publish it. The "Particulars" admit that the cabin had taken fire from the Guerriere's shot; and the "Sketches of the War," that the Constitution "had some spars shot away." Captain Dacres states, that the Constitution's stern was much shattered, and her lower-masts badly wounded. At all events, the moment the Guerriere blew up, Captain Hull, instead of continuing his cruize, bent his

course for Boston; where the Constitution arrived on the 30th of August.

The Americans acknowledge a loss of only 7 killed, and 7 wounded; yet several of the Guerriere's officers counted 13 wounded; of whom 3 died after amputation. Captain Dacres computes the Constitution's killed and wounded at about 20. An equal number of killed and wounded, as expressed in Captain Hull's list, scarcely ever occurs; except in cases of explosion. In our service, every wounded man, although merely scratched, reports himself to the surgeon, that he may get his *smart-money*, a pecuniary allowance so named. No such regulation exists in the American service; consequently, their returns of loss in action, are made subservient to the views of the commander and his government.

The Guerriere's established armament consisted of twenty-eight long 18-pounders upon the main-deck; sixteen carronades, 32-pounders, a 12-pound launch-carronade, and two long 9-pounders, upon the quarter-deck and forecastle; total 47 guns. The Guerriere, like most French ships, sailed very much by the head; and, to assist in giving her that trim, as well as to obviate the inconvenience of a round-house which intervened between the foremost and bridle ports on each side, and prevented the

gun stationed at the former port from being shifted to the latter, when required to be used in chase, two additional 18-pounders, as standing-bow-chase guns, were taken on board at Halifax. These guns, not acting upon the broadside, will not be estimated as part of the broadside-force; nor will the launch-carronade, because, owing to its own defects, or the want of some of its appendages, no use whatever was made of it. When Captain Skene had the Guerriere, he had ports fitted upon her quarter-deck for two brass 12-pounders, given to him by the Duke of Manchester. Upon quitting the Guerriere, Captain Skene, of course, took with him his brass guns. The vacant ports led some of the Constitution's officers to suspect, that the Guerriere's people had, between the time of surrender and of taking possession, thrown two of her guns overboard.

It is singular that Captain Hull's letter does not mention the force of the Guerriere. The "Particulars" state, plainly enough,—"mounting 49 carriage-guns;"—but that was not in the official letter. The people, therefore, had a right to indulge their imaginations on the subject; bearing in mind, no doubt, that the commander of their frigate Constitution, whose size and force they well knew, had spoken of—"so fine a ship as the Guerriere." Had the citizens, in general, given the Guerriere 60 guns, little

surprise would have been created; but what shall we say to "the senate and house of representatives of the United States of America, in congress assembled," passing a resolution, expressing, that the Constitution of "44 guns," had succeeded "in attacking, vanquishing, and capturing, the British frigate Guerriere, mounting 54 carriage-guns"?—The honorable mover of this flaming resolution prefaces it with,—"Far, very far, be it from me to boast";—and then gravely assures the house, that "the facts stated in the resolution have been ascertained at the proper department, and the proofs are on the table"!!

Of men and boys, the Guerriere had, originally belonging to her, 302. The parser's steward (whose business it is to serve out the rations of the ship) declares, that Lieutenant Pullman, a lieutenant of marines, three midshipmen, and 33 seamen and marines, were absent from the ship in prizes; that the Guerriere victualled, on the morning of the action, exclusive of four or five women, and some prisoners, 264; that seven of these were Americans who had been in the ship some years; that Captain Dacres (highly to his credit) gave orders that they should go below; that they all did so, except one, stationed forward, who, not having heard the word pass, remained at his quarters; that 19 of the crew were boys; most of them very young.

This account allows the Guerriere to have had at quarters, 239 officers and men, and 19 boys; but, as Captain Dacres has stated the absent men at 24, and the number of men at quarters at 244, his account will be deemed the most correct. Captain Hull prefers the number on the "quarter-bill"; and the "Particulars," without any ceremony, state,—"manned with 302 men."

The Constitution's officers used every art to inveigle the Guerriere's men into their service. Sixteen or eighteen, Americans and other foreigners, and about eight British, who had been pressed in their way out to the United States, remained at Boston, when the cartel sailed. Most of the former, and two of the latter, had previously entered on board the Constitution. With the above exception, the Guerriere's surviving crew, and a fine set of men they were, returned to Halifax N. S. Several of them passed into the Shannon; where they found ample relief for their wounded pride, in the subsequent achievement of that ship.

Captain Dacres, in his official letter, says: "I feel it my duty to state, that the conduct of Captain Hull and his officers to our men, has been that of a brave enemy; the greatest care being taken to prevent our men losing the smallest trifle."—Unfortunately, Captain Dacres had made this declaration before he discovered

the insidious attempts of the American officers upon his men; or that, when the latter, on removing from the Constitution, called for their bags, they were delivered up, nearly emptied of their contents.

The armament of the Constitution consisted of thirty long 24-pounders upon the main-deck, twenty four carronades, 32-pounders, and two long English 18s, bored to carry a 24-pound shot, (and therefore considered as 24s,) upon the quarter-deck and forecastle; total 56 guns. Except as to the improvement in the 18-pounders, this account of the Constitution's force is confirmed by the editor of the "Naval History," as will be seen presently. The Constitution had eight ports of a side upon her quarter-deck, a gangway-port, fitted to receive a shifting long gun or carronade, and five ports of a side upon her forecastle. Between the quarter-deck and forecastle, were breeching-rings and bolts, calculated for four guns of a side; if necessary to mount them: which guns, by the accounts of her officers, she mounted, when employed in the Mediterranean.

Although the Constitution did not, like the President and United States, carry guns in her tops, a deliberate contrivance for destruction was resorted to, of which many were the victims on board the Guerriere. Seven men were stationed in each top; six of whom were employed

in loading for him that was the best marksman. Captain Dacres was wounded in the back by one of these riflemen; and, had the ball passed half an inch more in front, he, too, would have been numbered among the dead.

The employment of rifled-barrel pieces in naval warfare, is certainly a great improvement. We use them in the army, but not in the navy. Robins, speaking of rifles, says:—"The exactness to which those who are dexterous in the use of these pieces, attain, is indeed wonderful; and that, at such distances, that if the bullets were fired from the common pieces, in which the customary aberration takes place, not one in twenty of them could ever be traced.

The Constitution's complement, when she sailed from Boston on the 2d of August, was about 476. On the 17th, Captain Hull re-captured, from the Avenger sloop of war, the American brig Adeline; on board of which he placed a prize-master, and, it is understood, seven men. This leaves 468; the number stated by her own purser's steward to have been victualled, exclusive of a few prisoners, on the morning of the action. Among them, scarcely one was to be seen that would rate as a boy in the British service; yet three boys will be allowed. A great many of the Constitution's crew were recognized by Captain Dacres as British seamen, principally Irishmen. The Guerriere's people

found among them several old acquaintances and shipmates. One fellow, who, after the action, was sitting under the half-deck, busily employed in making buck-shot cartridges to mangle his honorable countrymen, had served under the first lieutenant. He now went by a new name; but, on seeing his old commanding officer standing before him, a glow of shame over-spread his countenance. Were it possible that the Constitution's ship's company could, at this time, have been inspected by the officers of the British navy, generally, how many, besides the commissioned officers and the riflemen, would have proved to be *native* Americans?

The Guerriere was captured from the French on the 19th of July, 1806, by the Blanche, Captain Lavie. The following was the force of the two ships:—Guerriere, twenty-eight long 18-pounders, and two 68-pound carronades (in the bridle-ports, and therefore of no use in the broadside,) upon the main-deck, ten long 9-pounders, and ten carronades, 32-pounders, upon the quarter-deck and forecastle; total 50 guns. Broadside-weight of metal, (allowing for difference between French and English caliber,) 514 lbs.; complement of men and boys, in action, 317; size in tons, 1084.—Blanche, twenty-eight long 18-pounders upon the main-deck, ten long 9-pounders, and eight carronades, 32-pounders, upon the quarter-deck and forecastle;

total, 46 guns. Broadside-weight of metal 425 lbs.; complement of men and boys, in action, 244; size in tons, 1036.—This is introduced, merely in answer to several statements of the Americans, to the effect, that the Guerriere, when captured from the French, was of much greater force than we admitted her to be, when she was captured by the Constitution.

The Constitution was built at Boston, and launched on the 21st of October, 1797. She cost 302,718 dollars, 84 cents; or, 68,111*l.* 14*s.* sterling. Her full dimensions, in hull, spars, and sails, were found in a small M.S. memorandum-book, taken out of the Chesapeake frigate. In proof of its correctness, the dimensions of the President and Chesapeake, as there also given, agree exactly with the measurements since taken of those ships. The only apparent difference, except a trifle in the height of decks, between the dimensions of the Constitution, and of the President, appears in the "length of gun-deck;" which, in the former, is stated at "175 feet," in the latter "174 feet, $10\frac{1}{2}$ inches:" a difference, in fact, not worth noticing. Mr. Clarke states the "gun-deck" of the three "American 44-gun ships," to be "about 176 feet;" and, it is understood, they are all as nearly of one size, though differing somewhat in model, as their builders could make them. The Constitution having the same "keel for tonnage," and

"breadth of beam" as the President, (see p. 21,) her tonnage, both American and English, must be the same.

Dimensions of the two ships.

	Guerriere. Ft.	In.	Constitution. Ft.	In.
Length of lower-deck, from aft-part of rabbit of stem to fore part of rabbit of stern-post,	155	9	173	3
Breadth, extreme,	39	9	44	4
Main-mast, length,	92	0	104	0
Main-mast, diameter,	2	3½	3	5
Main-yard, length,	81	6	95	0
Main-yard, diameter,	1	7½	1	9

The Guerriere's spars are taken from those served out to the largest frigates of her class: the Constitution's, partly from the assertions of her own, and partly from the observations of British officers. Her main-mast was 2 feet 10 or 11 inches, in diameter, at the partners; but it had four quarter-fishes, each 3½ inches thick, reaching from a little above the main-deck to the top; hooped on after the mast was made: of course, adding to its strength, as well as bulk. The reader, therefore, may well conceive what impression the Guerriere's shot could make upon her opponent's masts.

Between French ships built in the Mediterranean, and in the ports of the Channel, there is nearly as much difference as between our oak

and fir-built ships. The Guerriere was built at l'Orient, upon a sudden emergency; and therefore hastily run up, with half-seasoned wood. Her timbers were, at last, in so decayed a state, that, had the Constitution succeeded in towing her into Boston, she would not have been worth the cost of repairing.

By "a fine ship" is meant, a ship possessing some extraordinary qualification, either of size or force, or of both. "Fine" is not an absolute, but a relative term. How, then, are we to judge of the officer who, sitting in the cabin of, truly, so fine a ship as the Constitution, writes home to his government, that, with that ship under his command, he has captured—"*so fine a ship* as the Guerriere?"—Had the Guerriere captured the Constitution, then, indeed, the expression would have been correct; nor could Captain Dacres well have said more.

Comparative force of the two ships.

		Guerriere.	Constitution.
Broadside-metal in pounds,	l. guns,	261	384
	carr.	256	384
		— 517	— 768
Complement,	men,	244	465
	boys,	19	3
		— 263	— 468
Size in tons,		1084	1533

Three to *two* in weight of metal and size, and nearly double in men! A reasonable man would,

at least, have divided his praises between the stronger party, which had conquered, and the weaker party, which had so bravely resisted. Not so the Americans; yet, from the excuses they make, when *their* ships are captured, it is evident they do not deny the principle.

"When we say to an American,—"Our frigates and your's are not a match."—He, very properly replies,—"You did not think so once." But what does this amount to?—Admitting we knew the force of the American 44-gun frigates, before the Guerriere's action, (which was only partially the case,) and yet considered that our 38-gun frigates were able to fight them, all that can be said is,—we are now convinced, that an American and a British ship, in relative force as *three* to *two*, are not equally matched. The facts are the same: it is the opinion only that has changed. Man the Constitution with 470 Turks, or Algerines; and even then, she would hardly be pronounced, now that her force is known, a match for the Guerriere. The truth is, the name *frigate* had imposed upon the public; and to that, and that only, must be attributed, the angry repinings of many of the British journalists, at the capture of the Guerriere. They, sitting safe at their desks, would have sent her, and every soul on board, to the bottom, with colours flying; because her antagonist was—"a frigate": whereas, had the Con-

stitution been called "a 50-gun ship," a defence only half as honorable as the Guerriere's was, would have gained for her officers and crew universal applause.

Captain Hull, and the officers and crew of the Constitution, deserve much credit for what they *did* do; first, for attacking a British frigate at all; and next, for conquering one, a third inferior in force. It was not for them to reject the reward presented by the "senate and house of representatives," because it expressed to be, for capturing a ship, "mounting 54 carriage-guns"; when, in reality, she only mounted, at most, 49. They, no doubt, smiled at the credulity of the donors; and, without disputing the terms, pocketted the dollars. But are we to sit still, and hear our gallant seamen libelled, because it may suit the Americans to invent any falsehoods, no matter how flagrant, to force a valiant character upon themselves?—Let him, who thinks so, pack himself off to the United States, and there join in defaming his countrymen.

The editor of the "Naval History," who, seemingly, delights in mysterious language, says thus of the Guerriere's capture:—"It has manifested the genuine worth of the American tar; and that the vigorous co-operation of the country is all he requires, to enable him to meet, even under disadvantageous circumstances, and

to derive glory from the encounter with, the naval heroes of a nation which has so long ruled the waves." In the midst of all this flummery, how came Mr. Clark to stumble upon "disadvantageous circumstances"? On which side were they?

The Americans had reason, indeed, to exult at the capture of a British frigate. When, too, it is known that, at the time of the Little Belt's affair, that ship and the Guerriere belonged to one station, and were actually seeking each other; and that the Guerriere's officers, by language of defiance, and otherwise, subsequently made themselves extremely obnoxious to the Americans, the reader will readily conceive, that no frigate in the navy could have been so desirable a trophy as the one they did take.

There is no question, that our vanity received a wound in the loss of the Guerriere. But, poignant as were the national feelings, reflecting men hailed the 19th of August, 1812, as the commencement of an æra of renovation to the navy of England. Through such a mass of ships, however, the progress of amendment would necessarily be slow. A real scarcity of seamen retarded the operation; and, unfortunately, the class of ships, the least interested in preparations to meet the Americans, had the first pick of the men. So that, even at the con-

clusion of peace with the United States, not more than half our frigates had improved, in men, gunnery, or appointments; and as to our 18-gun brigs, it would have taken another three years' war, to render them as effective, as their implied force, the character of the officers, and the lives of the men, imperiously demanded.

An author, whose book, says one of his critics, "owes nothing to fiction, nothing to artful disposition of drapery, to affected attitude, or to gaudy, over-heightened colouring, but is all matter of authentic history,"—has subjoined to his account of the Guerriere's action, a dissertation upon the comparative force of the old British 38, (now 46,) and the American 44-gun ships. As it may be no less amusing than instructive to learn, by what species of logic the Americans have persuaded themselves, and would persuade the world, that the force of "the American 44-gun frigates and of the British 38s, is very nearly equal," Mr. Clark's highly-applauded arguments upon the subject are here given in his own words:

"Much having been said on the disparity of force between the American 44-gun frigates and the British 38, the rates of the Constitution and Guerriere, it will, perhaps, not be out of place here, to give a comparative view of the force of each. Both the American 44-gun ships and the British 38-gun ships are constructed on the

same principles, and their guns are placed in the same relative position, forming batteries of a similar nature. The guns in each ship are placed on the main or gun-deck, the quarter-deck, and the forecastle. The gun-deck, which may be considered as the line of defence, is about 176 feet long in the American 44-gun ships, and about 160 feet in the English 38-gun ships. The line of defence, therefore, in the American 44-gun ships, exceeds the English by about 16 feet. But, it is to be observed, that the length of the line of defence by no means implies strength. This essentially consists in the number of guns that can be placed in battery, with advantage in a given line, and the strength of the ramparts and parapets, in which light the sides of the ship may be considered. A line of defence of 200 feet, mounting 30 guns in battery, would be about one-fourth weaker, and produce an effect one-fourth less, than a line of defence of 150 feet long, mounting the same number of guns, The American 44-gun ships mount thirty 24-pounders on the gun-deck, twenty four 32-pounder carronades, and two 18-pounders, on their quarter-deck and forecastle, or upper decks. The British 38-gun ships mount twenty eight 18-pounders on their gun-deck, eighteen 32-pound carronades, and two 18-pounders, on their quarter-deck and forecastle, besides a 24-pounder shifting gun. In

an engagement between ship and ship, the effect produced is by the broadside, or the number of guns placed in battery on one side of the ship; so that only half the number of guns in a ship can be considered as placed in battery, in its length or line of defence. The number of guns, therefore, of the American 44-gun ships, placed in battery in its line of defence, of 176 feet, will be 28. The number of guns in the English 38-gun ships, placed in battery in its line of defence, of 160 feet, will be 24; but, as they carry a shifting gun, which may be placed in battery on either side, the number will actually be 25; so that the number of guns in battery in the American 44-gun ships, will exceed those in the English 38-gun ships only one-tenth. But the American line of defence is one-tenth longer, and consequently would be one-tenth weaker than the English, if it had only the same number of guns in battery; consequently, the force of each, when the line of defence, and number of guns placed in battery are considered, is very nearly equal.

"The American 44-gun ships carry 24-pounders on their gun-decks; the English, 18-pounders. But, are not 18-pounders of sufficient weight of metal for the service of large frigates, and fully calculated to produce every effect that may be required in an engagement between frigates?—It has, moreover, been asserted by the

officers of the Constitution, that the shot of the Java's 18-pounders were only three pounds lighter than those of the American 24-pounders, after accurately weighing them both; so that, consequently, the difference in weight of metal was only one-eighth.

"It has been asserted in the British newspapers, that the American frigates were 74s in disguise. It has also been asserted by an English naval commander, in his official letter, that the American 44-gun ships were built with the scantling of a 74. If, by this assertion, he meant to insinuate that the American 44-gun ships were of the same nature with a 74, or ships of the line, he has manifested an extreme want of candor, or want of professional knowledge. 74-gun ships are all of the line; that is, they have guns mounted on two gun-decks, extending the whole length of the ship, or its line of defence, besides those on the quarter-deck and forecastle; and, in addition to these, there are guns on the poop. The length of the line of a 74 is about the same as that of the American 44-gun ship. A 74-gun ship mounts about 88 guns; consequently, the number of guns placed in battery in her line of defence, will be 44 guns; and, in the American frigate of 44 guns, only 28 in the same line of defence; consequently, the strength of the line of defence of a 74, is not very far from double that of an

American 44-gun ship, considered in respect of the number of guns, without taking into consideration the difference in weight of metal, and the compactness and strength of sides.

"This, we believe, sufficiently demonstrates the illiberality and absurdity of comparing the American 44-gun frigates to British 74s, with a view to disparage the rising glory of the American navy, and to depreciate the noble exploits of her gallant tars."

Although this elaborate performance purports to have been drawn up by no less a man than the "United States' topographical engineer," it shall not escape such an examination, at least, as will serve to expose its most important fallacies.

That "the American 44-gun ships, and the British 38-gun ships, are constructed on the same principles," is an assertion that might be easily disproved; the latter having a wide waist, that leaves no room for the use of guns along the gangways; and the former, an entire upper deck, reaching from stem to stern. (See plate 2.) But, as the British have built ships of a similar construction, and called them frigates; and, as the reader has already been put on his guard, against drawing any conclusions as to relative force, merely because two ships are classed under one denomination, (see p. 36,) the above statement of Mr. Clark's may be allowed to pass.

Mr. Clark's 44-gun frigate being "one tenth

longer" than the 38-gun frigate, has occasioned him to say a great deal in depreciation of a long "line of defence." Among *salt-water* engineers, or navy-men, a long ship is considered to have an advantage over a short one, as well from the additional room upon her decks, as from her ability to bring one or more guns, at either extreme of her "line of defence," to bear diagonally across her opponent. Of course, it is not meant to carry this principle *ad infinitum*, but to confine it to ships, or floating batteries in general. Agreeably to Mr. Clark's doctrine, our old first-rates, of 165 feet gun-deck, were preferable ships to our present first-rates, of 205 feet gun-deck; and the old three-decked 80s, of 156 feet, to a two-decked 80, of 197 feet.

In moderate weather, the ship with most decks, or "lines of defence," is certainly enabled to throw her shot more in a mass; and therefore with more destructive effect. On the other hand, blowing weather and a heavy sea, may compel her to shut her lower-deck ports; and at a time, too, when a large frigate, from the additional height of her ports, could fight every gun she mounted. So that, taking all circumstances into consideration, the question of comparative force still resolves itself into—the relative broadside-weight of metal.—Does the editor of the "Naval History" pretend to say, that American ships do not carry "shifting guns"?

After Mr. Clark has *proved* that the force of the American 44 and the British 38, is "very nearly equal," he asks:—"Are not 18-pounders of sufficient weight of metal for the service of large frigates; and fully calculated to produce every effect that may be required in an engagement between frigates?" If, by "large frigates," Mr. Clark means the American 44s, the answer to the first question is—*no;* because the deck-beams, sides, and timbers, of the 44, are calculated to bear 24-pounders. If, by "large frigates," he means the present British 46s, (old 38s,) the answer is,—*yes*; because the deck-beams, sides, and timbers of the latter, are calculated to bear only 18-pounders. This will appear clearer by stating, that, while the 30 long 24-pounders, with their carriages complete, placed upon the 44's main-deck, weigh 88 tons, 2 cwt, the 28 long 18-pounders, with their carriages complete, placed upon the 38's or 46's main-deck, weigh but 67 tons, 18 cwt.

As to the second question, that is already answered; unless Mr. Clarke means to say, that the effect produced by an 18-pounder, is equal to the effect produced by a 24-pounder; or that the "effect required to be produced in an engagement between frigates" does not consist of destruction at all, but of something else; which something he has not ventured to explain.

With respect to the Java's shot weighing more,

or the Constitution's less, than the nominal weights, that has been fully answered in a preceding page. (p. 10.) Whenever Mr. Clark can prove, that British 18, and American 24, pound shot, approach nearer, in diameter, than 5.040 to 5.547, (inches and decimal parts,) his arguments will merit attention. A French 18-pound shot weighs 20¼ pounds, English; which is only a trifle beyond "three pounds lighter" than a shot weighing 24 pounds English; and the Java, from which the shot in question was taken, had been a French ship, and then recently fitted out for the first time. Might not some of the French shot have been left on board? In that case, the reason for selecting, to be "accurately weighed," one of them, in preference to one of the English 18s, is obvious. As to the American shot selected to be placed in the opposite scale, who knows but that the American commanders order to be set apart, for this important service, one particular shot,—the smallest in the ship.

Instead of proceeding to disprove Captain Carden's assertion that "the American 44-gun ships were built with the scantling of a 74," Mr. Clark shifts his ground to the "nature" of a 74; and gives his readers a happy definition of "a ship of the line."

The force of the American 44-gun frigates, will now be fairly compared with that of several

classes of British ships; and, if to shame the Americans, be a hopeless task, it may yet be possible to convince the unprejudiced part of mankind, that our three frigates were captured by American ships, equal in force to British 64s.

Because the Constitution carried lighter carronades than either the United States or President, Mr. Clark has selected her as his standard of an American 44-gun frigate. But the Constitution is as able as they are, to carry 42-pounders; and the new American 44-gun frigates, Guerriere and Java, are stated to carry long 32-pounders upon their main-decks. On the other hand, neither of our three captured frigates, the Guerriere in particular, was as effective as a well-manned, fully-equipped frigate of their class. As a mean in force, of the five American 44s, the United States will be preferred; and the full dimensions of an American 44-gun frigate can be given, with accuracy, by our fortunate possession of the President.

The British 38-gun frigate, selected as the standard of size, will be the Macedonian; first, because she was one of the finest in the British navy; and next, because she is now in the possession of the Americans: who will therefore have an opportunity of submitting the following statement of her dimensions, to the test of actual measurement.

Comparative dimensions of the British 38, *(or new-rated* 46,*) and the American* 44*-gun frigate.*

		38.		44.	
		Ft.	In.	Ft.	In.
Length	*over-all*, being from fore-part of figure-head, to aft-part of fife-rail,	180	3	204	0
	of spar-deck, being from aft-part of apron to fore-part of stern-timber at the middle line,	163	6	182	9
	extreme, being from fore-part of stem at height of main-deck, to aft-part of stern-post, at height of wing-transom,	158	4	179	7
	of lower-deck, being from aft-part of rabbit of stem, to fore-part of rabbit of stern-post,	154	6	173	3
	of actual keel, being from fore-part of fore-foot, to aft part of stern-post,	140	4	156	6
Breadth	*over all*, or to outside of main-wails,	40	2	45	0
	extreme, or of frame, including the plank at the bottom,	39	6	44	4
	moulded, or of frame only,	38	10	43	8
Depth in hold, being from under-side of lower-deck plank to limber streak,		13	6	13	11
Height	of lower-deck, aft,	6	5	6	$6\frac{1}{2}$
	of lower-deck, midships,			6	$7\frac{1}{2}$
	of lower-deck, forward,			6	8
	between main and quarter-deck, gangways,	6	7	7	2
	between main and forecastle,	6	6	7	0
				6	11
	from under side of false keel, to upper part of figure-head,	34	4	39	1
	from ditto, to upper-part of fife-rail,	38	8	42	4
	from upper side of 'midship main-deck port-sill, to water's edge at load-water mark,	7	6	8	8
Load-draught of water, afore,		17	9	19	4
Load-draught of water, abaft,		19	0	20	6

		38.		44.	
		Ft.	In.	Ft.	In.
Main-deck beams,	broad, or *sided*,	1	0	1	4½
	deep, or *moulded*,	0	11	1	3½
Ditto ports,	width of,	3	0	3	5
	distance between,	7	3	7	5½
Topsides, thickness of, at	main-deck port-sills,	1	3	1	8
	quarter-deck do.	0	11¼	1	5
Main-mast,	length,	92	0	101	6
	diameter,	2	3½	3	5*
Main-yard,	length,	81	6	92	0
	diameter,	1	7½	1	8½
Main-shrouds,	Brit. frig. 7 pairs, Am. do. 9 pairs, each in circumference,	0	8	0	11

In the diameter of the 44's main-mast, the quarter-fishes are included; inasmuch as they contribute to the security of the mast in action. The fore and main-masts of our ships have only a small fish, or *paunch*, in front, to admit the yard, in its descent, to pass clear of the mast-hoops.

The difference between these ships in the quantity and stoutness of rigging, is an important consideration. Were the American ship to lose from her shrouds, a quantity of cordage equal to the whole over the mast-heads of the British ship, she would still have enough left to support her masts.

The relative stoutness of top-sides cannot be fully expressed by feet and inches; for, while the timbers of the American 44 are placed as close together as they well can be, there is a

* Including the quarter-fishes, see p. 112.

considerable space between each timber of the British 38. About three inches below the main-deck port-sills, the President's sides are twenty-two inches through. In fact, an American ship of war is almost a bed of timber.

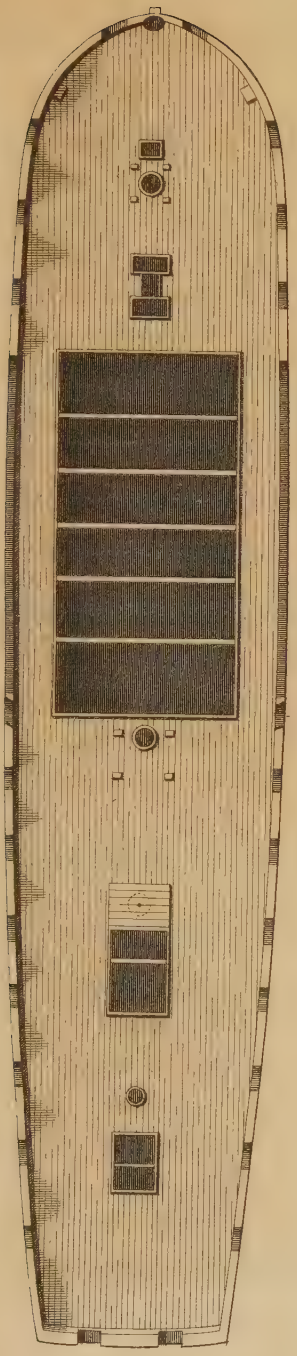
Plate 2 represents the plans, accurately taken, of the quarter-deck and forecastle of the President frigate, and a frigate built from the same draught as the Macedonian; and which consequently agrees in dimensions with the 38-gun frigate in the above comparative statement. The difference between a narrow path or gang-way, for the convenience of walking to and from the quarter-deck, and a broad space, calculated for carrying four guns, is readily seen: as may be, in fig. 2. the ring-bolts for the breechings of those guns. The reason that rings are placed there, and not at the regular ports, is, that the breeching passes round each port-timber at the latter; while, at the former, there are no port-timbers, the hammock-staunchions forming the sides of the ports. There is, also, at the gang-way, or entrance on board the ship, (*a*. fig. 2.) a regular port; having an iron plate fitted to receive the bolt of a carronade-carriage. At *a* fig. 1. is seen the quarter-deck chace-port, with the forward inclination of its sides, and the want of room for the gun to recoil, otherwise than in an oblique direction. No gun is allowed for this port; the foremost quarter-deck gun (usually a

Fig. 1.

PLATE 2.

Fig. 2.

to face page 128.



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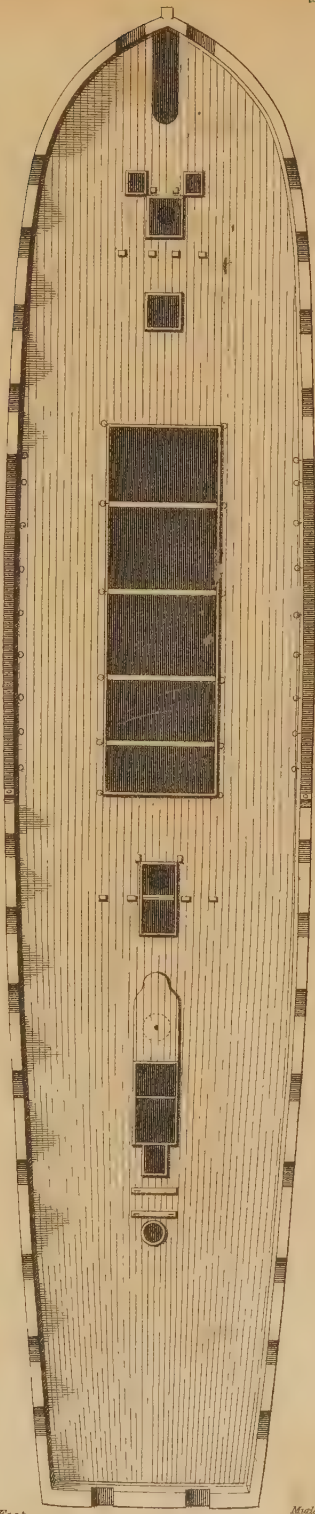

a

Scale ¼ of an Inch to a Foot

4 10 20 30 40 50 60 70 80 90 100

Mudlow Sc. 9 York Street

Published as the Act directs, May 20th 1817, by T. Egerton, Whitehall.

long gun) being intended to be shifted there, when necessary. The reason of the upper decks of the two ships differing so little in width, is, that fig. 1. is, what is called, *wall-sided*, while fig. 2.'s sides fall in as they rise. Upon the main-decks, the due breadth of each ship is preserved.

The regular armament of a 38 or 46-gun frigate, is that of the Java. The armaments of the Macedonian and Guerriere (except as to having a 12, instead of an 18-pound boat carronade) were the same as the Java's, till altered by their respective commanders. A 46-gun frigate's complement may be stated at 294 men, and 21 boys; total 315.

The President's armament may be seen at a subsequent page; also the number of men which she had on board, at the commencement of the action that placed her in our possession.

Comparative force of the British 38, *(old rate,) and the American* 44.

		British, (old rate,) 38.		American 44.	
Broadside-metal in pounds,	long guns,	261		408	
	carronades,	274		462	
			535		900
Complement,	men,	294		472	
	boys,	21		5	
			315		477
Size in tons,		1081		1533	

What have the Americans to urge against this? Is it not clear, that the relative effi-

ciency or force of a British (old rate) 38, and an American 44 gun frigate, instead of being, as Mr. Clark says, "very nearly equal," is in the proportion (taking no advantage of fractions) of *two* to *three?*

When the Guerriere was captured from the French, she was pronounced, in reference to ships like the Blanche, "of the largest class of frigates." Take the Guerriere, as she then was, for a standard of the *French* "44-gun frigate": her force was barely equal to that of the British frigate in the above comparative statement. What then becomes of the mass of groans and lamentations to be found in British newspapers, magazines, and registers, about the difference in the result of actions between British and French frigates, and British and American frigates? It now appears, clearly, that, in the one case, the ships were about equally matched; in the other, not so by a full third.

The relative force of the American 44-gun frigate and the higher classes of his majesty's ships, comes next to be considered.

In the year in which the American 44s were built, (1797,) we had in commission, four or five two-decked ships, rating also of "44 guns"; which, if the rate were any criterion, would be about equal in force to the American 44-gun frigates. But they were much inferior to the old 50-gun ship; whose force, as we have

seen, (p. 71,) did not equal even that of an American 36-gun frigate.

The guns of the British 64, and the 74 and 76, of the present rates, are here given together.

	British.		
	64.	74.	76.
Lower-deck,	26 long 24-prs.	28 long 32-prs.	28 long 32-prs.
Upper-deck,	26 — 18 —	28 — 18 —	30 — 24 —
Qr.-deck and forecastle,	2 — 9 — 12 carr. 32 —	8 — 12 — 12 carr. 32 —	6 — 12 — 2 carr. 68 — 12 — 32 —
Poop,	5 — 18 —	7 — 18 —	7 — 18 —
Total,	71 guns.	83 guns.	85 guns.

If the "admiralty-office navy-list" is correct, such of his majesty's ships as mount guns upon the poop, are still under-rated. The force of the above 74 is precisely that of the San Domingo and Valiant, when on the American coast; and the force of the 76 is that of the Bulwark, when on the same station. Deducting from the latter, the two 68-pound carronades, which were the captain's guns; and, from each ship one of the 18-pound carronades, as being a boat-gun, both the Valiant and Bulwark, to correspond with the order in council, should rate as 82s. The San Domingo, although built in 1810, is not in the list, having been broken up this twelvemonth.

In the spring of 1814, the new Leander, built of pitch-pine, and intended to match the large

American frigates, arrived on the Halifax station. She then mounted thirty long 24-pounders upon the main-deck; and twenty-four carronades, 42-pounders, and four long 24-pounders, upon the spar-deck; total 58 guns; besides an 18-pound boat-carronade. There was here no disguise whatever: the ship had two complete batteries of a side, reaching from stem to stern. The Leander was not the sort of *frigate* to entice the American 44s within gun-shot. The Americans proclaimed both her and the Newcastle to be *two-deckers;* and who could say otherwise? With the reduction of two of her 24s, and two of her 42s; and using the remaining two upper-deck 24s as shifting guns, one on the forecastle, the other through the gangway-port, the Leander might have been constructed as a regular 54-gun frigate; and yet fought the same number of guns upon the broadside, within one, that she does at present. The Leander still mounts no more than 58 guns, and a boat-carronade; yet, in the "admiralty-office navy list" for March last, the Leander, Newcastle, Java, and ships of that class now building, rate of 60 guns; while, in the same list, the Saturn, *razee*, of much greater physical force, rates two guns fewer.

What created the greatest surprise at Halifax, when the Leander first arrived there, was the appearance of her ship's company. People naturally expected to see a picked crew of British sea-

men. Instead of which, they saw tall and short, old and young; and soon learnt that there were very few seamen in the ship. Nominally, the Leander was well manned, for her books contained the names of 485; but 44 of them appeared as—boys. During her first cruize, she captured the U. S. brig Rattlesnake; whose officers could not help smiling at the idea of such a crew being sent out to oppose the Constitution's; a sample of whose men, in the late crew of the Rattlesnake, 131 in number, was then on board the Leander. The flimsiness of that ship's topsides, and the smallness of her scantling, generally, also took the attention of the American officers; most of whom had served on board the Constitution.

Thin sides, however, have their advocates. It is said that, when a ship is closely engaged, the thinner her sides, provided they can resist grape, the less destructive will be the shot in its passage through. The case of this very same Leander, when so gallantly engaged at Algiers, is brought forward. There, most of the shot that struck her, passed through both sides, without splintering; leaving a hole no larger than the shot itself. But, had the Leander come to action with one of the American 44s; she having the weather-gage, and being determined to preserve, for the first half-hour at least, that distance, at which her skill in

gunnery could best display itself, the latter's 24-pound shot would have found their way through the Leander's sides, quite slow enough to splinter; while her 24-pound shot, or the greater part of them, would have lodged in the sides of the American ship.—Had the Algerines commenced firing when they ought, the Leander would have had splinters enough.

Two other classes of newly-constructed frigates were also sent out upon the American station. The Severn, Liverpool, and Forth, differed from the 38s, in carrying 24s upon the main-deck, and four additional 32-pound carronades upon the quarter-deck and forecastle. They had about 350 men and boys; and measured a little under 1260 tons. It is difficult to say, for what description of American frigate, these ships were intended. For a comparative statement of their force, the Endymion's action may be consulted. The other class alluded to, consisted of the Majestic, Saturn, and Goliah, *razees*, or cut-down 74s. The force of the first-named of these newly-invented frigates has been already given. (See p. 34.) In broadside-weight of metal, they were far too formidable to be esteemed a match for any of the American frigates, except the new Guerriere and Java. Their crews were tolerable: the Saturn's, indeed, was a remarkably fine one.

Comparative force of the American 44, *with the British* 60,—64,—74,—*and* 76.

		British.			
	American 44.	60.	64.	74.	76.
Br. met. in pds. { l. guns,	408	408	555	748	844
carr.	462	504	246	264	332
	—900	—912	—801	—1012	—1176
Complement, { men,	472	441	462	553	603
boys,	5	44	29	37	37
	—477	—485	—491	—590	—640
Size in tons,	1533	1571	1415	1718	1925

Upon the face of this statement, the American 44-gun-ship is inferior in force to the British 60. Nor, had the former met and engaged the Leander, should we have been allowed to say one word upon the quality of the men, and the disproportion of boys, in the two complements, nor upon the difference in stoutness of scantling; of which the relative size in tons is here a most fallacious criterion.

The President and the Africa were, at the first of the war, cruizing at no great distance apart. Had they met and engaged, here would have been a fair match. In broadside-weight of metal, the 64 is a trifle inferior; and, in bad weather, might, like the two-decked 44 or 50, be compelled to shut her lower-deck ports. In men, the 64 is also inferior, but has the advantage in boys. In size, no great disparity exists. It may therefore safely be affirmed that, except

the new 60s, the only class of ship in the British navy, to which an American 44-gun frigate is equal in force, is the 64.

The 74 in the above comparative statement, if the boys are dismissed from the two complements, does not appear to be so decidedly superior to the American 44-gun ship, as to warrant the author of the "Naval History" in exclaiming against the "illiberality and absurdity of comparing the American 44-gun frigates to British 74s."

It is believed that the American government, in publishing Captain Stewart's paper, (see p. 16,) wherein he states, that a 74-gun ship is a match for "three large frigates," had for one object, to check the further progress of an opinion, then becoming prevalent throughout the United States, that an American 44-gun frigate was, in truth, not very unequal in force to a British 74. But Captain Stewart's 74 throws a broadside of 1612, instead of 1176 pounds, the force of the British 76, (with two 68-pound carronades added to her established armament,) and his "large frigate," 680, instead of 900 pounds. So that the American estimate relates to ships differing widely in force from those, between which the present comparison is made. It may serve to illustrate the remarks made at a preceding page (p. 17) upon Captain Stewart's argument about the difference in scantling be-

tween 74s and frigates, to mention, that the top-sides of the Independence 74, at the lower-deck port-sills, are stated to be thirty one inches thick; while no British-built 74 measures, at that place, more than twenty six inches.

To complete the exposure of the Americans, for having gasconaded so much at the capture of our 38, by their 44 gun frigates, it remains only to suppose a case, wherein an American 44 is captured by a British ship, as much superior in force to her, as she was to the 38.

The set of figures that would give that proportion are—broadside-weight of metal, 1514; —complement, 722;—size in tons, 2173. As, however, no ship in the British navy, except the Caledonia or Nelson, throws a broadside equal to 1514 pounds, the above-mentioned 76 will, for argument's sake, be considered as possessing the required superiority in force.

Chance might have brought the President and Bulwark within sight of each other. But, where is the credulity to be persuaded, that the former would have staid to fight; much more, have fought on, till her masts were all shot away, her hull shattered to pieces, and a third of her crew killed and wounded?—Rather than miss the comparison, probability must be violated, and such a case be supposed to have happened.

To finish the comparison, we must also suppose, that the British, lost to all sense of shame, —bereft of reason, in fact,—do actually publish this capture of the American 44-gun ship by their 76, as a "glorious victory,"—knight the conqueror,—make him free of cities,—escort him on his journeys with a body of troops,—cheer him as he passes,—erect triumphal arches to him,—weigh down his sideboard with plate,—strike off medals, adorned with emblematical devices,—set sculptors, painters, and poets to work, to immortalize the "brilliant exploit;"—and, finally, hang up, by way of sign, at every tenth public-house, a view of the action, reversing the size of the ships.—What would the other nations of Europe say?—What would America say?

CHAPTER VI.

Frolic leaves Jamaica for Honduras—Sails thence with convoy—Hears of the American war—Encounters, and is disabled by, a severe gale of wind—Falls in with the Wasp—Sends convoy a-head—Details of the action—Frolic surrenders—Re-capture of her, and capture of the Wasp—Frolic's and Wasp's damages, loss, and force—Statement of comparative force—Remarks thereon—Macedonian sails from England—Parts company with her convoy—Falls in with the United States—Sustains an irreparable accident at the onset—Details of the engagement—Damage, loss, and force, of each ship—Their relative size considered—Commodore Chauncey's opinion of the frigate United States—Statement of comparative force—Remarks thereon—Macedonian and French captured frigates.

H. M. brig Frolic arrived in the West Indies in 1807, and continued cruizing there till the middle of 1812; when she left Port Royal, Jamaica, to collect the homeward-bound trade at Honduras, and convoy them to England. She was, at this time, very short of complement;

and the majority of her crew in a debilitated state, owing to the length of time they had been on the station. Upwards of 40 would have been invalided, had the war with America been known, or even suspected.

The Frolic left the bay of Honduras on the 12th of September, with about 14 sail under convoy; and, when off the Havannah, Captain Whinyates was informed by a Guernsey ship, of the war with America, and the loss of the Guerriere. On the night of Friday, the 16th of October, the Frolic and her convoy encountered a violent gale of wind, in which they separated, and she had her main-yard broken in two places, and her main-top-mast badly sprung; besides much other damage. Her fore-top-mast also had been previously sprung.

Six sail of the convoy had joined before dark the next evening; and, on the following morning, at daylight, while the Frolic's men were at work upon the main-yard, a sail hove in sight, which, at first, was taken for one of the missing convoy. Upon her nearing the Frolic, and not answering the signals, the main-yard was got off the casks, and lashed to the deck; and the Frolic hauled to the wind, under her close-reeved fore-top-sail, and boom-main-sail, to let the convoy get sufficiently a-head, to be out of danger.

Captain Whinyates, having, two days before,

passed a Spanish convoy protected by a brig, hoisted Spanish colours, by way of decoy. As soon as the stranger, which proved to be the U. S. sloop of war Wasp, Captain Jones, discovered that the ships of the convoy were nine miles right to-leeward, under all sail before the wind, she bore down upon the Frolic.

The Frolic fired the first broadside, and continued to fire with such rapidity and precision, that, in about four minutes, the Wasp's fore-top-mast came down, and she received other considerable damage; but, at that instant, the Frolic's gaff-head braces being shot away, and having no sail upon the main-mast, she became unmanageable. The Wasp accordingly took a raking position, while the Frolic could not bring a gun to bear. After the Frolic had sustained considerable loss by the Wasp's fire, she fell on board the enemy; who, for upwards of 20 minutes, continued pouring in his unreturned broadsides, and did still more execution by his musketry. When resistance was quite at an end, the Americans boarded, and struck the Frolic's colours.

Mr. Clark gives a more circumstantial account of the action, than is contained in either official letter. (App. Nos. 13 and 14.) He begins by stating, that the merchant-ships were well manned, and that four of them mounted from 16 to 18 guns each; but that, "notwith-

standing, Captain Jones resolved to attack them. The convoy made their escape under a press of sail. About 11 o'clock, the Frolic shewed Spanish colours. The Wasp immediately displayed the American ensign and pendant. At 32 minutes past 11, the Wasp came down to-windward on the larboard side of the Frolic. When within about 60 yards she hailed. The Frolic then hauled down Spanish colours, hoisted the British ensign, and opened a fire of cannon and musketry. This was instantly returned by the Wasp; and, nearing the enemy, the action became close and spirited. About four or five minutes after the commencement of the action, the main-top-mast of the Wasp was shot away, and having fallen, with the main-top-sail-yard, across the larboard fore and fore-top-sail braces, rendered her head-yards unmanageable during the remainder of the engagement. In two or three minutes more, her gaff and mizen-top-gallant-sail were shot away. She, however, kept up a close and constant fire. The sea was so rough, that the muzzles of the Wasp's guns were frequently under water. The Americans fired as the side of their ship was going down; their shot, of course, either struck the Frolic's deck, or below it. The English fired as their vessel rose; their balls, consequently, only struck the rigging, or were ineffectual. The Wasp, having now shot a-head of the Frolic, poured a

broadside into her, which completely raked her. She then took a position on the Frolic's larboard-bow. A most spirited fire was now kept up from the Wasp: it produced great effect. The fire of the Frolic had slackened so much, that Captain Jones gave up his intention of boarding her, lest both vessels might be endangered by the roughness of the sea; but, in the course of a few minutes more, not a brace of the Wasp was left: all had been shot away. Her rigging was so much torn to pieces, that Captain Jones was afraid that her masts, being unsupported, would go by the board, and the Frolic thereby be enabled to escape; he therefore resolved to board, and at once decide the contest. With this intention he wore ship, and ran down upon the enemy; the vessels struck each other; the Wasp's side rubbed along the Frolic's bow; the jib-boom of the latter entered between the main and mizen rigging of the Wasp, directly over the heads of Captain Jones and his first lieutenant, Biddle, who were then standing together, near the capstan. The Frolic now lay in so good a position for being raked, that it was resolved not to board until another broadside had been poured into her. So near were the two vessels, that while the men were loading the guns, the ramrners of the Wasp were pushed against the Frolic's sides; and two of her guns went through the bow-ports of the

Frolic, and swept the whole length of her deck. About this time Jack Lang, a brave and intrepid seaman of the Wasp, and who had once been impressed by a British man-of-war, jumped on a gun with his cutlass, and was springing on board the Frolic, when Captain Jones, desiring to fire again before boarding, called him down; but, probably, urged on by his impetuosity, he did not hear the command of his captain, and was immediately on the bowsprit of the Frolic. Lieutenant Biddle, perceiving the ardor and enthusiasm of the Wasp's crew, mounted on the hammock-cloth to board; the crew immediately followed; but the lieutenant's feet being entangled in the rigging of the Frolic's bowsprit, and Midshipman Baker, in his ardor to board, laying hold of his coat, he fell back on the Wasp's deck; he directly sprang up, and, as the next swell of the sea brought the Frolic nearer, he got on her bowsprit, where Lang and another seaman were already. He passed them on the forecastle; and was much surprised at not seeing a single man alive upon the Frolic's deck, except the seaman at the wheel, and three officers. The deck was slippery with blood, and strewed with dead bodies. As he went forward, the captain of the Frolic, and two other officers, who were standing on the quarter-deck, threw down their swords, and made an inclination of their bodies as a sign of submission. The co-

lours of the Frolic were still flying; none of her seamen, probably, dared to go into the rigging to strike them, for fear of the musketry of the Wasp. Lieutenant Biddle, himself, immediately jumped into the rigging, and hauled down the British ensign. Possession was taken of the Frolic 43 minutes after the commencement of the action. She presented a most shocking spectacle: her berth-deck was crowded with dead, wounded, and dying. Not above 20 of her crew escaped unhurt."

It was very good of Mr. Clark to suggest, that Captain Jones resolved to attack the "four well-manned ships, armed with 16 or 18 guns each." Captain Jones had no such intention; or he would not have waited till they were hull-down to-leeward, before he closed upon the Frolic. The mercantile knowledge of an American commander was sufficient to inform him, that those ships would have forfeited their insurances, had they not obeyed the Frolic's signal to make the best of their way. There can be little doubt that a disabled American sloop of war would have called them to her protection, instead of engaging single-handed, under circumstances so disadvantageous.

The argument about the two methods of firing is ingenious; but the disabled state of the Frolic before a shot was fired, and her totally unmanageable state almost immediately after-

wards, accounts for the little execution she did. Previous to the loss of her boom-main-sail, her fire was very far from being "ineffectual:" it was such as, could it have been continued, would have captured the Wasp, in a quarter of an hour more. Owing to the Frolic's very light state, (she having scarcely any stores on board,) and her inability to carry sail, the heavy sea going, caused her motion to be much more quick and violent than that of the Wasp. Under such circumstances, it was difficult to point the guns with precision; but, highly to the credit of her officers, the Frolic's men had been exercised.

Mr. Biddle's family resides in Philadelphia, within a door or two of Mr. Clark's publisher; who therefore could do no less than insert his neighbour's account of the action. But, in justice to a gallant young man, it is but fair to state, that Lieutenant Rodgers, of the Wasp, was the first American officer on board the Frolic.

Neither Captain Jones nor Lieutenant Biddle mentions a word about the crippled state of the Frolic, previous to the engagement. That, among honorable men, it is customary, in official accounts, to do justice to an enemy, the Americans themselves have had an instance, in Captain Hillyar's letter, detailing the capture of the Essex. He there particularly notices "the very discouraging circumstance of her

having lost her main-top-mast." (App. No. 71.) And Captain Tobin, of the Andromache, in his letter, detailing the capture of la Traave, magnanimously excuses her feeble resistance thus:— "Indeed, such was the disabled state of her masts previously to our meeting, that any further opposition would have been the extreme of rashness." (Nav. Chron. vol. xxx. p. 443.)

The Frolic was much shattered in her hull; and both her masts fell over the side, in a few minutes after she surrendered. She lost 15 men killed; her first lieutenant and master, mortally, and her commander and second lieutenant, severely, wounded; also 43 of her men wounded severely and slightly: some of whom died afterwards. Not above 20 men remained on the Frolic's deck, unhurt: the remainder were below, attending the wounded, and performing other duties there. The only officer not badly wounded was the purser. It was the musketry of the Americans that so augmented the loss, particularly among the wounded. The second lieutenant, Frederick B. Wintle, had two balls in him, besides being wounded by three others.

The Wasp had a few shot in her hull, and one passed near the magazine; yet, according to Mr. Clark, or Lieutenant Biddle rather, the Frolic fired too high. The Wasp's main-top-mast was shot away, and her three lower-masts

were wounded; but, owing to the goodness of the sticks, they remained standing. Captain Jones says, he had "five killed and five wounded;" (App. No. 14;) but some time after the Wasp and Frolic had been taken possession of by the Poictiers 74, two men were found dead in the Wasp's mizen-top, and one in the main-top-mast-stay-sail netting. When questioned as to their loss, the Americans gave different accounts; and it is not likely that Captain Jones could speak positively on the subject, considering that both his own vessel and his prize were taken from him, in less than two hours after the action terminated.

It is fortunate, that Captain Jones and Lieutenant Biddle did not apprize each other, how they meant to arm the Frolic, in their letters home; as the essential difference in their statements made even Americans waver. The real force of the Frolic was sixteen carronades, 32-pounders, two long 6-pounders, and a 12-pound boat-carronade, mounted upon the top-gallant-forecastle; total 19 guns. Her people had, somewhere in the West Indies, weighed up, out of shoal water, a 12-pound carronade; which, during the action, remained lashed to the deck, under the top-gallant forecastle. Captain Jones converted the Frolic's two 6s, and this dismounted carronade, into "four 12-pounders upon the main-deck," and the single carronade

upon the top-gallant forecastle, into "two 12-pounders, carronades;" making the Frolic's total force amount to "22 guns." Lieutenant Biddle correctly enumerated the whole of the guns, but made "two long 9s" of the 6s; and, what must have been a wilful mistake, represented the mounted and dismounted 12-pound carronades, as "32-pound carronades," by giving the Frolic 18, instead of 16, of the latter.

The Frolic's complement, on going into action, consisted of 91 men, and 18 boys; (most of them very young;) together with one passenger, an invalided soldier; total 110. Captain Jones knew his interest too well, to touch upon the Frolic's complement. Her men, as stated before, had been for some years in a West India climate; and upwards of 40 of them ought to have been invalided: none, in short, were in robust health. They, however, behaved extremely well; and continued cheering during the whole of the action. One of them, when desired by Lieutenant Biddle to strike the Frolic's colours, then lashed to the main-rigging, very properly replied,—"As you have possession of the brig, you may do it yourself."

The Wasp mounted sixteen carronades, 32-pounders, and two brass long 12-pounders. She had also on board, two brass 4 or 6-pounders, which she usually carried in her tops; but which had been brought on deck in the gale of the

15th. They were mounted on small carriages; but not, it is believed, used in the action. Although Captain Jones could enumerate more guns than were any where to be found in the Frolic, he takes care that his own number shall not include these 4 or 6-pounders, by stating, that the Frolic, with her "22 guns," was superior to the Wasp by "four 12-pounders."

The muster-book of the Wasp contained 148 names; but only 130 prisoners were received by the agent at Bermuda. Captain Jones mentions the loss of two men, along with the jib-boom, on the 15th; and "Niles' prize-list" mentions a re-captured brig, as sent into Boston by the Wasp. The date of the re-capture does not appear; but, it is probable, it occurred on the Wasp's passage from France, whence she arrived in the Delaware some time in July. There could not have been more than eight men sent in the re-captured brig; which men, we will suppose, had not joined their ship previous to her sailing in October. Thus, fixing the number killed at eight, we have 138 for the complement of the Wasp on going into action. The cause of truth would have benefitted greatly, had the American commanders taken half as much pains to fix the complements of British ships. Never was a finer crew seen, than was on board the Wasp. She had four lieutenants; and, while the Frolic had only one mid-

shipman, and he a boy, the Wasp had 12 or 13 midshipmen, chiefly masters and mates of merchantmen: stout able men, each of whom could take charge of a ship. Their chief employment in the action, was as captains of the guns. Among the crew, was one lad of 18; the remainder were from 20 to 35 years of age: all stout, athletic fellows, in full health and vigor. A great proportion of them were Irishmen; and several, deserters from British ships.

It is now that the reader can appreciate Mr. Biddle's vivid description, of "the ardor and enthusiasm of the Wasp's crew" in boarding the Frolic; whose originally debilitated crew had then become reduced in number to scarcely a third of the assailants, and were without an officer in a situation to head them. Captain Jones's statement, that "no loss was sustained on either side after boarding," was calculated to cast a slur upon the British. A view of the relative numbers at the boarding moment, is all that is required to dispel any such impression. If wounding an already wounded man is to be accounted a "loss," Captain Jones is incorrect in saying, "no loss was sustained on *either* side," for Mr. Biddle's friend, Jack Lang, on his mounting the Frolic's forecastle, actually lodged a musket-ball in Lieutenant Wintle's right thigh; and this, while he was preventing one of the Frolic's men from firing at Lieutenant

Rodgers. Some one else of the boarding-party, at the same moment, fired at and wounded Captain Whinyates; who, like his brave second lieutenant, could scarcely keep the deck, from the severity of the wounds he had previously received.

The Frolic was built in 1806; the Wasp in 1801. The principal dimensions of the two vessels here follow:—

	Frolic, brig.		Wasp, ship.	
	Ft.	In.	Ft.	In.
Length on deck, from rabbit to rabbit,	100	0	105	10½
Breadth, extreme,	30	7	30	10

The Wasp's scantling was as stout as a British 28-gun frigate's; especially at her top-sides. She was taken into the service; but, unfortunately, foundered at sea, as is supposed, in the spring of 1814.

Comparative force of the two vessels.

		Frolic.		Wasp.	
Broadside-metal in pounds,	l. guns,	6		12	
	carr.	268		256	
			274		268
Complement,	men,	92		137	
	boys,	18		1	
			110		138
Size in tons,			384		434

With Captain Jones' official letter before it, the American court of inquiry (App. No. 16) could not say less than—"the brilliant and

successful action with his Britannic M. S. Frolic, of *superior force to the Wasp;* and even the most moderate American, while he may be brought to doubt the equality of force in some of the naval actions, will exultingly remind you that, "in the action of the Wasp and Frolic,"—using the words of Mr. Clark,—"the superiority of force, certainly, was on the side of the British."

Truly, there does appear to have been, in broadside-weight of metal, a "superiority" of—one *forty-sixth* part.—But have we not seen that, while the British brig went into action crippled by a gale, the American ship had her masts and yards all perfect; that, while the former began the attack with 92 men, and 18 boys, chiefly debilitated by sickness, the latter had 137 men, and one *nominal* boy, all lusty and healthful? —Let, then, the reader form his own judgment of the comparative force of the Frolic and Wasp.

However disagreeable to the Americans, it is but fair to mention, that, not many months previous to the capture of the Frolic by the Wasp, the Alacrity, a sister-brig to the former, and mounting the same number and description of guns, but without having been crippled by a gale, was captured off Bastia, in the island of Corsica, after a close action of half an hour, by the French brig of war Abeille, of 20 guns; asserted by the French (and not denied by the

British) account to have been 24-pound carronades: complement not mentioned. The Alacrity's loss is stated to have been 15 killed, and 20 wounded; the Abeille's, 7 killed, and 12 wounded. In the Naval Chron. vol. xxxi. p. 486, will be found the sentence of the court-martial upon the Alacrity's surviving officers and crew. They were all acquitted; as, it need hardly be added, were those of the Frolic, with deserved encomiums upon the bravery displayed in her defence.

H. M. S. Macedonian sailed from England on or about the 29th of September, with an Indiaman under convoy to a certain distance. Having parted with her, and while proceeding to the North American station, the Macedonian, on the 25th of October, fell in with the U. S. ship United States, seven days from Boston; which port she had left along with the squadron under Commodore Rodgers. An action ensued; of which the British and American details are given in the official letters to be found in the Appendix. (Nos. 18. and 19.)

In bearing down to attack the American ship, the whole of the Macedonian's carronades on the engaging side, had their chocks, which, in this frigate, were fitted outside, cut away by the raking fire of the United States. Thus was disabled the entire upper-deck battery of the Macedonian, before she had well begun the action. Subse-

quently, all the other carronades but two, were disabled by the same means. The "Sentence of the court-martial" does not fail to notice that, "previous to the commencement of the action, from an over-anxiety to keep the weather-gage, an opportunity was lost of closing with the enemy; and that, owing to this circumstance, the Macedonian was unable to bring the United States to close action, until she had received material damage;" but very justly acquits Captain Carden, his officers and crew, of "the most distant wish to keep back from the engagement."

Commodore Decatur's assertion, that the Macedonian was "at no time within the complete effect of his musketry and grape," is untrue: for, long before the action ended, Mr. O'Brien, the Macedonian's surgeon, extracted from the right arm-pit of a midshipman, an iron shot, weighing twelve ounces; which was either a canister or "grape," beyond dispute. Although, "for the first half-hour," the United States "did not use her carronades," the disabled state of the Macedonian, before that half-hour had elapsed, proves that she was within fair range of the American 24s; and it is at long shot, chiefly, that the "obvious superiority of gunnery" shews itself. At such a safe distance, the "steady conduct" of the United States'

crew, might, as the commander says, well "equal the precision of their fire."

Admitting that Captain Carden erred in the distance at which he chose to engage the United States, and the way in which he approached her,* the disabled masts, shattered hull, and slaughtered crew, of the Macedonian, afford ample proofs that she was not surrendered, till all hopes were at an end. Captain Carden states the action to have lasted "two hours and ten minutes;" Commodore Decatur, "an hour and a half." Captain Hull has taught us how to explain this. Commodore Decatur dated the commencement of the action from the time his opponent was within carronade-range: so that, by adding to his account, "the first half-hour," in which, as he says, he did not use his carronnades, we have two hours as the duration of the action; only ten minutes short of the time stated by Captain Carden.

The damages of the Macedonian are very fully detailed in the British official account. For rendering her sea-worthy, and for afterwards conducting her home in safety, much credit is due to the American officers and crew. It is singular, no doubt, that the two ships, during a six week's passage across a wide

* See Clerk's "Essay on Naval Tactics," p. 24.

extent of sea, should not have met one out of the many British cruizers a-float.

The Macedonian lost in the action, 1 master's mate, the schoolmaster, boatswain, 31 petty-officers, seamen and marines, and 2 boys, killed; 2 seamen mortally, 5 petty-officers and seamen dangerously, her first lieutenant, 1 midshipman, 23 petty-officers, seamen and marines, and 4 boys, severely; and her third lieutenant, 1 master's mate, and 30 petty-officers, seamen and marines, slightly wounded: total, killed 36; wounded 68.

The two accounts differ greatly as to the damage sustained by the United States. While Captain Carden says: "The enemy has suffered much in masts, rigging, and hull, both above and below water;" Commodore Decatur says: "The damage sustained by this ship was not such as to render her return into port necessary." The manner in which the action was fought, and the Macedonian's disabled state at the early part of it, afford no reasonable ground for supposing, that the damages of the United States were very important.—One of the officers writes as follows:—"It is remarkable that, during an action of one hour and a half, and a fire which I believe was never equalled by any single deck, not an accident occurred, nor a rope-yarn of our gun-tackle strained.—All the guns on the quarter-deck and forecastle of the Mace-

donian were dismounted, or rendered unserviceable."

The loss of the United States is stated by Commodore Decatur at no more than 5 killed, and 7 wounded. Among the latter is included, "Lieutenant Funk, who died four hours after the action." Mr. Clark, also, notices one of the seamen as having been mortally wounded; which coincides with Captain Carden's statement, that a lieutenant and six men had been thrown overboard. According to the proportions between the killed and wounded, the American slightly wounded cannot have been enumerated; a circumstance that receives confirmation from the fact, that the American officers, when questioned on the subject of their loss, told each a different story.

The Macedonian's established armament was the same as the Guerriere's; but, owing to some alterations made at the instance of her commander, she also mounted 49 guns: twenty eight long 18-pounders upon the main-deck, eighteen (instead of the customary sixteen) carronades, 32-pounders, a 12-pound launch-carronade, and two French brass 9-pounders, upon the quarter-deck and forecastle. The launch-carronade, being usually mounted upon an elevating carriage, to fire over all, becomes part of the broadside-force.

So long as an enemy has a right to enumerate

the guns of his adversary as a part of her force, it becomes of national importance that commanders should be restrained from mounting on board their ships, any more guns than the establishment allows; without, at least, furnishing and maintaining, at their own expense, the requisite number of additional hands.

The Macedonian victualled, on the morning of the action, 300 souls; consisting of 270 men, 22 boys, and a band of eight foreigners, then lately received out of the prison-ship at Lisbon. The latter refused to fight; and were therefore put in the hold during the action. Of course, they will be excluded from the estimate. No complement is given to the Macedonian, in Commodore Decatur's letter.

The band, as may be supposed, instantly deserted to the enemy: whose triumph now became a fit subject for the display of their musical talents. Some of the Macedonian's foreigners, not of the band, also entered the American service. Nor is it surprising, that many of the British deserted; considering what powerful inducements were held out to them. They were given sums of money; promised grants of land; and kept continually drunk, until carried into the country, beyond the controul of their officers. The law of honor is binding between nations, as well as individuals; and, surely, there cannot be a grosser infraction

of it, than insidious attempts to withdraw from their allegiance the subjects of an honorable enemy.

The United States mounted thirty long 24-pounders, described as English ship-guns, upon the main-deck; sixteen carronades, 42-pounders, upon the quarter-deck; a 12 or 18-pound carronade at her gangway-port on either side; (see plate 2. fig. 2, *a*.) six carronades, 42-pounders, and two long 24-pounders, upon the forecastle; making, with three howitzers, 6-pounders, one in each top, 58 guns. It is probable, owing to the commodore's complaint, that he could not reach the Macedonian with his carronades, that one of the forecastle 24s, instead of the shifting carronade, was fought through the gangway-port, and the latter placed upon an elevating carriage, so as to fire over all, in the usual manner; thus presenting a broadside of 32 guns. The force of the United States has been so estimated at a preceding page; (p. 129;) but, as the British officers, when brought on board, found both the 24s stationed upon the forecastle, (a reference to the plate, will shew the facility of transporting them from one end of the deck to the other,) the number of broadside-guns will, in the present instance, not be encreased beyond 31.

The top-guns, being considered as a masked or concealed battery, and the shifting carronade as

a "boat-gun," are necessarily excluded from the American accounts. With those exceptions, a New York paper of May, 1813, mentions the recent reduction of the frigate United States' armament "from 54, to 48 guns:" which confirms Captain Carden's statement, as to the number of his opponent's guns; and as to their caliber, the correspondence, and other proceedings, relative to the New-London challenge, have since placed that beyond a doubt.

The complement of the United States was, as admitted by her officers, 478. Only four boys were seen in the ship; and the Macedonian's officers, it will be recollected, were upwards of six weeks on board.

The crew consisted of picked seamen, all young and vigorous. A great proportion were known to be British sailors: which accounted for many of the guns being named after British ships, and some of our celebrated naval victories. The Macedonian's men recognized several old shipmates; and an officer's servant, a young lad from London, named William Hearne, actually found among the hostile crew—his own brother! —This hardened traitor, after reviling the British, and applauding the American, service, used the influence of seniority, in trying to persuade his brother to enter the latter. The honorable youth, with tears in his eyes, replied:—

"If you are a d—d rascal, that's no reason I should be one."

The Macedonian was built at Woolwich in 1810. Her full dimensions have appeared already. The United States was built at Philadelphia; and launched on the 10th of May, 1797. She cost 299,336 dollars, or 67,350*l.* 14*s.* 7*d.* sterling. Her dimensions are similar to those of the President and Constitution; although her model may be somewhat different.

Two statements of the comparative size of the Macedonian and United States, have appeared in the American prints. Both make the Macedonian's "length on deck, 166 feet;" that of the United States "176 feet." One statement makes the Macedonian's "breadth of beam 42 feet 8 inches;" and that of the United States "42 feet:" the other statement makes the "Macedonian's "breadth of beam 48 feet 8 inches, tonnage 1325;* that of the United States "48 feet, tonnage 1405." Admitting the "48" to be a typographical error, there are few Americans who will not still insist, that the two ships do not differ in length by more than 10 feet; and that their extreme breadth is about the same. One could almost imagine, that the Macedonian had suddenly acquired the *stretching* qualities of her new masters.

* The Macedonian's true American tonnage is 1031.

If, during her stay at New York, that was the case, she had, when subsequently seen at New-London, shrunk to her original size. In October, 1813, the Macedonian, United States, and Hornet, each painted black, were, by an Englisman, seen at anchor about five miles above New London. Owing to the three ships lying close together, and their being painted alike, a spectator, standing on the banks of the river, was enabled to form a tolerable idea of their relative size. It required, truly, no very steady gaze to discover, which was the late British, which the American frigate. Upon the same person afterwards seeing H. M. ships Nymph and Newcastle, also painted alike, anchored, head and stern, in Halifax harbour, he was forcibly struck with the same appearance of disparity, in hull, spars, and rigging.

How are we to understand Commodore Decatur, when he says: "She (the Macedonian) is a frigate of the largest class"?—Suppose the Newcastle, a frigate about the same size as the United States, had captured the Congress, a frigate about 50 tons larger than the Macedonian. Would Lord Stuart, in his official letter, have said:—"She (the Congress) is a frigate of the largest class"?—Perhaps Commodore Decatur had some scruples about considering his ship as a *frigate;* and meant only to compare the Macedonian with some of the old British 38-gun

class; such as the Arethusa, Sea-horse, and several others. He certainly has not, in any part of his letter, styled the United States a "frigate"; as Captains Hull, Bainbridge, and Stewart, in all their's, have not failed to style the Constitution.

As a proof how much the Americans, in expressing their opinions, are governed by circumstances, Commodore Chauncey, in a conversation respecting the capture of the President, held with some British naval officers, since the peace, declared, that he would much rather fight a battle in the frigate United States, because her sides were stouter than the President's, and she would, he thought, stand a longer battering. Captain Carden therefore deserves credit for his moderation, when speaking of his opponent's scantling; and the attempts of the Americans to equalize the two ships, in size, can now be better understood.

Comparative force of the two ships.

		Macedonian.	U. States.
Broadside-metal in pounds,	l. guns,	261	384
	carr.	300	492
		— 561	— 876
Complement,	men,	270	474
	boys,	22	4
		— 292	— 478
Size in tons,		1081	1533

Here, another case of "very nearly equal

force," turns out to be a superiority on the American side, of full one third.—Nay, a special committee determined, that the Macedonian was *quite* equal to the United States; and, an act of congress of the 28th of June, 1798, having provided that,—"if a vessel of superior, or equal force, shall be captured by a public-armed vessel of the United States, the forfeiture shall accrue wholly to the captors,"—the amount of the Macedonian's valuation, 200,000 dollars, was paid over to Commodore Decatur, his officers, and crew.

The disparity in execution was, in this action, about the same as in the Guerriere's. Where ships are equal in force and gunnery, an accidental shot may disable one ship; so that she cannot manœuvre, nor bring more than a few guns to bear; while her fortunate adversary plays round her; sweeping her decks at every broadside. The relative execution, after that period, depends not more on the prowess of one party, than on the fortitude of the other. Should the disabled ship have been, from the first, instead of equally matched, the weaker of the two, her loss, both previous, and subsequent, to her disability, will be proportionably greater. If, not in force only, but in gunnery and equipment for war, she is decidedly inferior, is it extraordinary that, after a two hour's contest, the disparity in execution should be as great, as it

certainly was, in both this and the preceding frigate-action?

The Americans have admitted, that "all the guns on the quarter-deck and forecastle of the Macedonian, were dismounted," while "not an accident occurred" on board the United States. This forms the prominent feature of this action; and is of itself sufficient to account for the inequality of loss.

The "Naval Monument," upon the authority of one of the officers of the frigate United States, says of the Macedonian,—"She is just such a ship as the English have achieved all their single-ship victories in. It was in such a ship that Sir Robert Barlow took the Africaine, that Sir Michael Seymour took the Brune, and afterwards the Niemen, that Captain Milne took the Vengeance, Captain Cooke *the* la Forte, Captain Lavie the Guerriere, Captain Rowley the Venus; and God knows how many others. She is in tonnage, men, and guns, just such a ship as the English prefer to all others; and have, till the Guerriere's loss, always thought a match for any single-decked ship afloat." (Nav. Mon. p. 24.)

The fact is, none of the ships here named, carried 24-pounders upon the main-deck; nor, except the Brune, Forte, and Guerriere, mounted more than 44 guns. If we deduct the "troops and artificers" from l'Africaine, and the "las-

ears" from la Forte, none of the ships had a greater complement than 320. In point of size, none, except la Vengeance (see p. 65) and la Venus, exceeded the Chesapeake; and that by a trifle only.

Had not the Americans, (and they were the only nation,) in dread of "just such a ship, in tonnage, men, and guns," as the Macedonian, constructed a class of ships, which they called frigates, each, by their own account, "superior to any European frigate of the usual dimensions,"—"just such a ship" as the Macedonian would still be "a match for any single-decked ship afloat."—Let the Americans, for the future, send to sea, frigates no larger and heavier than the strongest we ever, "in single-ship victories," took from the French, or from any other power; and we pledge ourselves, in case of war, to serve those frigates, twice out of three times, as we did the Africaine, Brune, Niemen, Vengeance, Forte, Guerriere, Venus, and "God knows how many others," not forgetting the U. S. frigate Chesapeake.

CHAPTER VII.

Java commissioned, and fitted for an East India Voyage—Departs from Spithead—Captures an American merchant-man—Falls in with the Constitution and Hornet—Chases and engages the former—Full details of the action—American dismantling shot—Java's damages and loss—Final destruction—Constitution's damages and loss—Force of the Java in guns, men, and size—Recapture of the Java's prize by the Hornet—American subterfuge exposed—Force of the Constitution in guns, men, and size—Dimensions of the two ships—Statement of comparative force—Remarks thereon — Amelia and l'Arethuse French frigate.

ABOUT the middle of August, the French prize-frigate, la Renommée, lying in Portsmouth harbour, was commissioned as H. M. S. Java; and the command of her given to Captain Henry Lambert, a distinguished officer. The Java was fitted for the East Indies; and sailed from Spithead for that destination on the 12th of November; having on board a great quantity of naval stores, together with the following passengers: Lieutenant-general Hyslop, as governor of Bombay, two military officers of his

staff, seven persons (including servants) in civil situations; also one master and commander, two lieutenants, one marine-officer, four midshipmen, one clergyman, one assistant surgeon, and 76 petty-officers and seamen, chiefly marine-society boys, for ships on the East India station. Two outward-bound Indiamen took advantage of her convoy.

On the 12th of December, the Java captured the American ship William; and a master's mate and 19 men were placed on board, with directions to keep company. On the 24th, being in want of water, Captain Lambert stood in for St. Salvador; and the two Indiamen, rather than go so far out of their way, proceeded alone on their passage.

On the 29th of December, when about ten leagues from the Brazil-coast, the Java, having her prize in tow, fell in with the U. S. ships Constitution, Commodore Bainbridge, and Hornet, Captain Lawrence; the latter having just left St. Salvador in search of the Constitution, which was away in the offing. Having cast off the prize, and ordered her to proceed to St. Salvador, the Java went in chase of the large ship to-leeward. The details of the action cannot be so well given, as in the very words of the Java's late first-lieutenant, when addressing the court-martial upon his trial for her loss. Lieutenant Chads' journal, was verified on oath by every

witness examined upon the occasion. He proceeds, as follows:

"My public letter is before this honorable court; (App. No. 22.;) but, being written immediately after the action, and on board the enemy, it does not, nor indeed could the compass of a letter, contain the whole detail of so long an action; and which detail, therefore, I now submit to this honorable court.

"At 8 A. M. close in with the land, with wind at N. E. discovered a sail to the S. S. W. and another off the entrance of St. Salvador, cast off the prize in tow, and made all sail in chase of the vessel to leeward. At 10 made the private signal, which was not answered. At 11 hauled up, bringing the wind on our larboard quarter, took in all studding-sails, prepared for action, the stranger standing towards us under easy sail, and apparently a large frigate. At a little after noon, when about four miles distant, she made a signal, which was kept flying about ten minutes, when she tacked, and made sail from us, under all plain sail, running just good full; hauled up the same as the chase, but the breeze freshening, could not carry our royals; we were going at least ten knots, and gaining very fast on the chase. At 1. 30. she hoisted American colours. At 1. 50. having closed with the enemy to about two miles, he shortened sail to his top-gallant-sails, jib, and spanker, and

luffed up to the wind; hoisted our colours, and put ourselves under the same sail, and bore down on him, he being at this time about three points on our lee-bow. At 2. 10. when half a mile distant, he opened his fire from the larboard-side, and gave us about two broadsides before we returned it, which was not done till within pistol-shot, on his weather-bow, with our starboard guns. On the smoke clearing away, found him under all sail before the wind; made sail after him. At 2. 25. engaged him with our larboard guns, received his starboard; at 2. 35. wore, and raked him close under his stern, giving him the weather-gage, which he did not take advantage of, but made sail free on the larboard tack; luffed up, and gave him our starboard guns, raking, but rather distant; made sail after him. At 2. 40. enemy shortened sail; did the same, and engaged him close to-windward. At 2. 50. he wore in the smoke, and was not perceived till nearly round, having just lost the head of our bowsprit, jib-boom, &c.; hove in stays, in the hopes of getting round quick and preventing our being raked, but the ship hung a long time, and we received a heavy raking broadside into our stern at about two cables' length distant; gave him our larboard guns on falling off; the enemy wore immediately; did the same.

"At 2. 55. brought him to close action within

pistol-shot, (at this time the master was wounded, and carried below,) till 3. 5.; when, finding the day evidently gone, from all our rigging being cut to pieces, with our fore and main-masts badly wounded, Captain Lambert determined on boarding, as our only hope; bore up, and should have succeeded in laying him a-breast of his main-chains, but from the unfortunate fall of our foremast, the remains of our bowsprit passing over his stern, and catching his mizen-rigging, which was a great misfortune, as it brought us up to the wind, and prevented our raking him. Whilst under the enemy's stern, attempting to board, there was not a soul to be seen on his decks; from which circumstance, I am induced to believe there was a good prospect of success. This manœuvre failing, we were left at the mercy of the enemy; which he availed himself of, wearing across our bows, raking us, when our main-top-mast went, and wearing again, at 3. 2. under our stern. At 3. 30. our gallant captain was mortally wounded, and carried below. From this time, till our mizen-mast went, at 4. 15. he laid on our starboard-quarter, pouring in a tremendous galling fire; whilst, on our side, we could never get more than two or three guns to bear, and frequently none at all. After this we fell off, and the enemy shot a-head, which again gave us the chance of renewing the action, which was done

with good spirits, broadside and broadside, Java very frequently on fire from firing through the wreck, which lay on the side engaged, till 4.35. when the Constitution made sail, and got out of gun-shot, leaving us a perfect wreck, with our main-mast only standing, and main-yard gone in the slings; cleared the wreck, and endeavoured to get before the wind, by setting a sail from the stump of the fore-mast and bowsprit; got the main-tack forward, the weather yard-arm remaining aloft; cleared away the booms, and got a top-gallant-mast out, and commenced rigging it for a jury fore-mast, and a lower-steering-sail as a fore-sail; but, before we could get this accomplished, we were obliged to cut away the main-mast, to prevent its falling in-board, from the heavy rolling of the ship. The enemy bore up to renew the action; made every preparation to receive him; re-loaded the guns with round and grape; mustered at quarters, and found 110 men missing, six quarter-deck guns, four forecastle, disabled, and many of the main-deckers, with the wreck lying over them, the hull knocked to pieces; and the fore-mast, in falling, had passed through the forecastle and main-decks; all our masts and bowsprit gone, the ship making water, with one pump shot away, consulted now with lieutenants Nerringham and Buchanan, when it was determined to engage him again, should he give

us an opportunity of so doing with a probability of disabling him, which was now our sole object; but that it would be wasting lives resisting longer, should he resume a raking position, which unfortunately was the case; and when close to us, and getting his broadside to bear, I struck, and hailed him, to say we had done so, at 5. 50. At 6, she took possession of us, and proved to be the American frigate Constitution. The next day I found our loss was 22 killed, and 102 wounded: two of whom are since dead. The Americans allowed they had 10 killed; but differed very much about their wounded, which I found to be 44 severely, and four mortally; the slight wounds I could not ascertain.

"Having in the detail stated the number of killed and wounded on both sides, and as my account differs from the one in the public papers, and said to be the official report of Commodore Bainbridge, I beg leave to state to the court the manner in which I obtained this knowledge. Being, of course, anxious to discover the loss sustained by the enemy, I directed Mr. Capponi, assistant-surgeon, to lend his assistance in dressing their wounded; this he did, and reported to me the statement I have made. It having also been stated in the papers, that the Constitution was in a short time in a condition to commence a second action, I must beg

to observe, that I do not think such a statement could have been authorised by Commodore Bainbridge, for her rigging was much cut, and her masts severely wounded; so much so, as to oblige her to return to America, which she certainly otherwise would not have done, for she was waiting only to be joined by the Essex on the coast of Brazil, when the further destination of this squadron, I was given to understand, was India.

"I will trouble the court with but one more remark. When the prisoners were removed from the Java, she was set fire to, although but 12 leagues distant from St. Salvador, with moderate weather; the cause of which was, her shattered state, and not from any fear of taking her to a neutral port, as stated in Commodore Bainbridge's letter; for he repaired to the same port with his own ship, carrying in a valuable prize, the Eleanor schooner, from London."

Plate 1, displays a variety of the American "round and grape." (App. No. 25.) We all recollect what imprecations were hurled against us by the American journalists, when they received an account, that "combustible materials had been thrown from the Shannon upon the Chesapeake's decks." Upon that occasion, a celebrated paper, the "United States Gazette," used the following language:—"Against such modes of assault, no skill, no courage, no foresight, can be

found to avail; and it is no more dishonor thus to be overpowered, than it is to be beaten down by a thunderbolt. We speak with entire confidence and certainty on this point, that, if the Bonne Citoyenne had accepted the challenge of Captain Lawrence, and he had obtained a victory by the use of such means, we should have sickened at the sight of his laurels."—And yet, at the very time of uttering this rhapsody, the Americans, by the aid of their star, chain, and bar shot, had crippled, and captured, three British frigates, and two sloops of war;—nay, the very ship whose capture they were thus trying to excuse, had on board, and actually used, the very shot represented in the plate.—Confronting a man with his own words, is an admirable method; for, if he is not past blushing, it shames, as well as convicts him.

When ships engage at a short distance, less depends on the precision, than on the rapidity of firing; therefore, the ship, whose men are practised in gunnery, finds it to her interest to keep at long shot. Yet, as continually yawing away in the smoke, and avoiding close action, in the stronger ship especially, does not look well on paper, the commodore did right to complain of "the enemy keeping at a much greater distance than he wished."—So far, however, from that having been the case, all the witnesses examined at the court-martial concur in stating,

that the Constitution avoided close action, till the Java was disabled: then she approached; and, by successive raking fires, and the riflemen in her tops, committed nearly all the slaughter that occurred. (App. No. 22. and 26.)

If any could have saved the Java, it was boarding; and that was frustrated by the bowsprit getting foul of the enemy's mizen rigging; and by the immediate fall of the fore-mast. The men were ready: so was the heroic boatswain, with his one arm mutilated, the other bearing his pipe, to cheer up his gallant comrades, that they might "make a clean spring" upon the enemy's decks.

In the falling of the Java's fore-mast upon the main-deck, and disabling the guns there, we see, at once, the advantage possessed by a ship having a sufficient space along the gangway, to cover the men stationed at the main-deck guns, over a ship having a waist, or large open space, extending nearly from side to side. (See Pl. 2.)

Both the British and American accounts agree, exactly, as to the time when the action commenced; but Commodore Bainbridge fixes its termination at the moment when the Constitution hauled out of gun-shot to repair damages: who else would not have fixed it, at the striking of the Java's colours?—The whole continuance of the action was three hours and 40 minutes.

The damage done to the Java has been fully detailed in Lieutenant Chads' address to the court. Her loss in the action, amounting to 22 killed; 2 mortally, 5 dangerously, 52 severely, and 43 slightly, wounded, appears at the end of the official letter. (App. No. 22.)

Captain Lambert fell by a rifle-ball fired from the Constitution's main-top. The bullet entered his left side, and lodged in the spine. He languished till the night of the 4th of January; and, on the next day, was buried at St. Salvador, with military honors. A midshipman, named Edward Keele, only 16 years of age, who was badly wounded, and had his leg amputated, enquired, soon after the action was over, if the ship had struck; and, seeing a ship's colour spread over him, grew uneasy, until he was convinced it was an English flag. This gallant youth died on the following day. The circumstance of the boatswain, with a tournaquet on his arm, (which he knew must be amputated, as soon as the surgeon was ready,) returning to his quarters, as if nothing had happened, is a strong trait of heroism and devotion.

Commodore Bainbridge, in his letter, says:— "The enemy had 60 killed, and 101 wounded, certainly; but, by the enclosed letter, written on board this ship, (by one of the officers of the Java,) and accidentally found, it is evident that the enemy's wounded must have been much

greater than as above stated, and who must have died of their wounds previously to their being removed. The letter states 60 killed, and 170 wounded."

The surviving officers of the Java consider this letter, as the forgery of some one belonging to the Constitution. Let us submit its merits to the test of probability. It bears date on board the Constitution; and therefore was written after the prisoners had been removed. Is it likely, then, that the writer would have included among the "wounded," the men who had "died previously to their being removed"?—would he not have included those among the "killed"?—Commodore Bainbridge's number of the Java's wounded, agrees exactly with the British return of wounded, signed by the Java's surviving commanding-officer, and surgeon; why not then have relied upon the veracity of those officers, as to the number killed? Were there no persons among the Java's crew, not even those that entered on board the Constitution, to whom the commodore could refer as corroborating this extraordinary letter?—Admitting, for a moment, a British return of loss in action to be a fictitious instrument, it would, surely, in a case where it was necessary to shew that the ship had been defended to the last extremity, be an over, not an under estimate. But a British return of killed and wounded, cannot

be otherwise than correct; the wounded, and the widows of the killed, having no other evidence to appeal to, in support of their title to relief.

Commodore Bainbridge's letter contains not one word about any damage sustained by the Constitution; not even that the sails and rigging were cut; as usually inserted, if only to jeer us for bad firing. There can be no doubt that the American government has suppressed the entire paragraph relating to the Constitution's injuries by the Java's shot: and that, perhaps, because the commodore was obliged to assign those injuries as an excuse (and, of course, he would describe them all) for breaking up his intended cruize to the South Seas; which, at that time, it was not expedient to make public. All the glory reaped from the Java's capture, was, in the opinion of the Constitution's officers, a poor compensation for the rich harvest they had long been anticipating from their intended cruize. Reluctantly, they quitted St. Salvador, on the 6th of January, upon their return to Boston; where, immediately upon her arrival, the Constitution underwent a thorough repair. Then the citizens, and several Englishmen also, saw clearly what she had suffered in the Java's action. Lieutenant Chads mentions the damage done to her spars and rigging; and, in direct proof of the advantage of

stout masts, the Java's 18-pound shot had passed through two of the Constitution's lower-masts; yet they were deemed sufficiently secure, without being fished.

Commodore Bainbridge states the loss of the Constitution to have been "9 killed, and 25 wounded." That this is incorrect, appears as well from what Lieutenant Chads has stated, as from the following extract of a letter from Mr. Thomas Cooke Jones, late surgeon of the Java:—

"The Americans seemed very desirous not to allow any of our officers to witness the nature of their wounded, or compute their number. I ordered one of my assistants, Mr. Capponi, to attend when their assistant went round; and he enumerated 46, who were unable to stir from their cots, independent of the men who had received, what they called, "*slight hurts.*" Commodore Bainbridge was severely wounded in the right thigh; and four of their amputations perished under my own inspection. I have noticed these facts, that your readers may be convinced of the falsity of their official dispatches; and to authorise their being received with some degree of scepticism." (Naval Chron. vol. xxix. p. 415.)

The American newspapers informed us that Lieutenant Aylwin, of the Constitution, died of his wounds on the 28th of January; and it was reported in Philadelphia, that two or three of

the men had also died in the passage home. It cannot escape the reader, that it is as much the interest of the Americans, in actions in which they have been successful, to under-rate their own, as to over-rate the British loss. This it was that suggested to Mr. Clark the propriety of shewing, in appropriate columns, the "comparative loss in killed and wounded." Thus we have, in the Java's action:—"American loss, 34,"—"British loss, 171;"—when, if truth had been consulted, we should have had, (excluding the British "slightly wounded," because the Americans, with "slight hurts," cannot be enumerated,)—"American loss, 55;" —"British loss, 81;" a proportion about equal, as will be presently seen, to the comparative force of the two vessels. But the Java's second lieutenant says, that the greatest loss was sustained, "not in the early part of the action," but "after the ship became unmanageable, and the Constitution took a raking position;" (App. No. 26;) and the "Journal" admits, that the Constitution's wheel "was shot entirely away," within 20 minutes from the commencement of the action; when, also, as appears by the evidence of Lieutenant Saunders, four out of the nine men were killed. It is clear, therefore, that, had the Java not been so soon, and so completely disabled, there would have been a much less disparity in point of execution, than, under

all the Java's disadvantages, did really exist between the two ships: and, when it is known that the men, owing to their awkwardness, inexperience, or some other cause, allowed two or three raking opportunities to pass, without firing more than half a dozen shot at the Constitution, the only surprise will be, that there was not a still greater disparity in the slaughter on board the two ships.

When the Java was fitted, she received on board, twenty-eight long 18-pounders upon the main-deck; sixteen carronades, 32-pounders, one launch-carronade, 18-pounder, and two long 9-pounders, upon the quarter-deck and forecastle; total, 47 guns. Not another gun of any description had the Java, when captured; and the launch-carronade, owing to some accident, was not even used. For that reason, probably, it was omitted in the statement of force, subjoined to Lieutenant Chads' letter. Determined not to be out-done by Captain Hull, Commodore Bainbridge made his prize-frigate of "49 guns" also; and the editors of the "Naval History," "Naval Monument," and "Sketches of the War," have not scrupled to particularize those "49 guns." The two first agree in adding two to the sixteen 32-pound carronades, and in substituting "one shifting gun, a 24-pounder," for the launch-carronade; but the two 9s, Mr. Clark (see p. 118) makes "two 18-pounders,"

Mr. Bowen "two large 12s." So little, however, is consistency studied by American historians, that Mr. Clark, in another page of his work, says, —"Java, guns mounted, 48."—But the most extraordinary statement of the Java's force, appears in the "Sketches of the War."—"The Java carried twenty eight 24-pounders on her gun-deck."—And this, too, in a third edition!—Was there no American honest enough to set the editor right?

The Java's complement, on leaving Spithead, was 277 officers, seamen and marines, and 23 boys; making, with the 97 passengers, a total of 397. The mate and 19 men, placed on board the William, reduced this number to 377; which agrees exactly with Lieutenant Chads' account of "ship's company and supernumeraries" present in the action.

The whole number of prisoners received out of the Java amounted to 356; subsequently reduced, by the death of the captain, one midshipman, Keele, (who, having died previous to the date of the surgeon's return, was included among the "killed,") and one able seaman, to 353. Yet Commodore Bainbridge, after having "liberated and given up to the governor of St. Salvador, nine Portuguese seamen," and allowed "to land, without any restraint, three passengers, private characters," actually paroled "38 officers, and 323 petty-officers, seamen, marines,

and boys;" total 361, instead of 341, the number of prisoners left, after deducting the 12 not paroled. How is this?

Commodore Bainbridge, apparently, was here guilty of as gross a fraud as any to be found upon the records of the admiralty-courts, wherein his countrymen, during a long reign of *neutrality*, had so often shocked honest men by their hardihood. The only difference is, that the national officer expects as much to be implied from his honor, as the merchant-captain or supercargo did from his oath.

Now for the fact. The William prize-ship was re-captured by the Hornet, on the afternoon of the action; arrived at St. Salvador on the same day that the Java did; and the prize-crew were landed from the Hornet, at the same time that the prisoners out of the Java were landed from the Constitution. The reader sees, then, how it was. The Java's mate and 19 men were added to the above-mentioned 341; and the *knowing* commodore paroled, as he said, 361 of the Java's crew. Not a word is there, in his letter, of any prisoners arriving from the Hornet, or of the Java's prize having been re-captured at all; although the William, at the date of the commodore's letter, was lying at anchor in St. Salvador, in company with the Constitution and Hornet. Aware that Captain Lawrence, in his official letter announcing the capture of the

Peacock, would mention the re-capture of an American ship of 600 tons, and therefore expose the trick, it was contrived that his letter should comprise, only what occurred subsequently to the 6th of January, the day on which, as stated before, the Constitution left St. Salvador for the United States. (App. No. 29.) So that, after the commodore had, by his "60 killed," his 361 paroled, and 12 not paroled, *proved* that the Java had 433 men, his forbearing to state, in the official letter, that she had more than "upwards of 400," added to his scrupulous exception of the "three passengers, private characters," established, beyond power of contradiction, the *modesty* of the American officer!

But, in truth, who were these "three passengers, private characters," so generously exempted from parole?—No other, it would appear, than three of the Java's seamen, who had been fools enough to enter the American service. To have deducted them from the amount of prisoners received, would be making the Java's complement appear three men short of what it could, otherwise, be *proved* to have been. To have confessed the fact, would never do. Therefore, all the Java's passengers, naval, military, and civil, were paroled as "officers, petty-officers, seamen, marines and boys," and the hiatus made by the three traitors, was cleverly filled up three *nominal* "passengers, pri-

vate-characters, whom the commodore" (generous man!) "did not consider prisoners of war, and permitted to land without any restraint;" and of whom, of course, no further account was taken.

Without searching the Java's crew for Danes, Swedes, Italians, Spaniards, or any other foreigners; or even regarding the "nine Portuguese seamen" so politically "given up to the governor at St. Salvador," it is still fair not to include, as part of the Java's complement on going into action, the seven passengers in civil situations. That will reduce the number to 370; comprising 280 of her proper crew, the three military officers, and all the supernumerary naval officers and seamen on board.

To shew that the estimate is correct, the following recapitulation may be necessary:—

Java's proper crew, including boys,	300	
Deduct men sent on board prize,	20	
		280
Add passengers of every description,		97
Total number on board, during action,		377
Deduct killed, (see p. 284,)		24
Total number landed from Java,		353
Add prize-crew,		20
Total No. alive of the 397 originally on board,		373
Deduct the "9 Portugeuse and 3 private persons,"		12
Total No. paroled by Commodore Bainbridge,		361

The manner in which the Java's men were treated by the American officers, reflects upon the latter the highest disgrace. The moment the poor fellows were brought on board the Constitution, they were hand-cuffed, (a thing unknown in our service, except upon urgent necessity,) and pillaged of almost every thing. True, Lieutenant-general Hyslop got back his valuable service of plate, and the other officers were treated civilly. Who would not rather that the governor's plate was, at this very time, spread out upon Commodore Bainbridge's sideboard, than that British seamen, fighting bravely in their country's cause, should be put in fetters, and robbed of their little all?—What is all this mighty generosity but a political juggle,—a tub thrown to the whale?—Mr. Madison says to his officers: "Never mind making an ostentatious display of your generosity, where you know it will be proclaimed to the world. If you lose any thing by it, I'll take care congress shall recompense you, two-fold. Such conduct on the part of an American officer of rank, will greatly tend to discredit the British statements as to any other acts of your's not so proper to be made public; and will serve, besides, as an imperishable record of the national magnanimity and honor."—One object the Constitution's officers missed by their cruelty. Three only of the Java's men would enter with them: the

remainder treated with contempt their re-iterated promises of high pay, rich land, and liberty.

Courage is an inherent principle in Britons; but courage alone will not make a seaman. If to know the duties of one, for the mere purpose of navigating a ship, requires some experience, how much more is required when a ship has an enemy to contend with. That she may manœuvre with success, (a most important operation,) the sails must be trimmed with the utmost nicety; and not a moment lost in looking for a rope, or considering what to do. Great judgment and presence of mind is often necessary, to repair a temporary damage by shot, or delay the fall of a tottering mast. A proficiency in all this constitutes the able seaman. Others of the crew are required at the guns. There stand men who, every one knowing exactly what he has to do, load and fire their gun with quickness and precision. Here stand men who, except a few, mere novices at the business, are looking upon each other for instruction; and, when they have succeeded in loading their gun, nine times out of ten, discharge it at random.

About forty or fifty of the Java's men had seen service; and, no doubt, were tolerable seamen. At the head of these, was the gallant boatswain; and among them, were many who cheered, while having their wounds dressed in the cockpit. But the remainder consisted of

newly-pressed landsmen, or of ill-disposed, weakly hands; the refuse of other ships. As to her supernumeraries, they, as stated before, were chiefly marine-society lads; rather an incumbrance, than a use, on board a ship of war. During the few weeks that intervened between the manning, and the capture, of the Java, disciplining the crew at the guns was, in a manner, prevented, by the lumbered state of the ship.

The marines of the Java were not much employed at the early part of the action, owing to the distance maintained by her opponent; and towards the last, the ship's dismasted state confined them to her decks. Of the 34 marines there stationed, "18," says the officer commanding them, "were very young recruits; the rest had been to sea before." Of what use are marines, acting as such, unless good marksmen? A musket-bullet will not perforate a ship's side. To reach the enemy, (from the level of the deck, at least,) it must catch him at the fleeting moment of exposure; as he hastily ascends the rigging, or incautiously shews his head above the bulwarks.—Can "very young recruits" hope to succeed at this?

The Java's gallant commander, previous to his leaving Spithead, made several applications for a more effective and better disposed crew; foreseeing, as he did, the probability of falling in with one of the large American frigates. He

was reminded of the difficulty of procuring men; and told, that an East India voyage would make seamen!

The Java, thus manned, left England on the 12th of November; and the official account of the Guerriere's capture had reached the admiralty since early in October. Let him who may think there was, at this time, in the British navy, a scarcity of frigates of the Java's class, turn to the list for November, 1812; where he will perhaps be surprised to see, among the ships in ordinary, the fine 24-pounder frigate Endymion; a ship as nearly equal in force to the American frigate Constitution, as any Briton could wish. True, the Endymion, according to the papers laid before parliament, in February, 1815, was ordered to be fitted in "July, 1812;" but she was not got ready till the "18th of May, 1813."

Doubtless, a voyage to the East Indies and back, with occasional drilling at the guns, *would* have greatly altered the character of the Java's men; and, had the Constitution then met that ship, even without her ninety seven passengers, the disparity in force would not have been so great.

With the change of the Constitution's commander, a slight change occurred in her armament; a single shifting 18-pound carronade having been substituted for two of her 32s. This shifting carronade she fought on either side,

through the gangway-port, the same as the United States. (See p. 160.) As a proof that the American commanders had the privilege of altering, in some degree, the armaments of their respective ships, the "Report of a committee" on the American naval establishment, dated in January, 1814, contains the following, as one of the "causes of the abuses complained of:"—"The great latitude allowed commanders, in altering, repairing, and furnishing their ships." With the exception of the 18-pound carronade, considered probably as a boat-gun, the "Sketches of the War" gives a similar account of the Constitution's force to that contained in Captain Chads' statement. But, most unaccountably, accuses that officer of "largely overrating" the Constitution's force. "He reported," says the editor, "her force to be—forty two long 24-pounders, sixteen carronades, 32-pounders, and one carronade, 18-pounder; being in all 59 guns."—Whence did the editor extract this account? Not an American newspaper that copied the letter, but gives the lie to his assertion.

The Constitution, having none of her men absent in prizes, had on board her full complement; which, according to the statement of her first lieutenant, consisted of 485. Admitting the regular establishment of the American 44-gun frigates to be no more than 475, "the great latitude allowed the commanders in furnishing

their ships," enabled them to take on board supernumeraries; and the Guerriere's capture, and Commodore Bainbridge's interest at Boston, gave the Constitution, among the seamen, a decided preference. Only one boy was seen on board of her, and he was 17 years old; older, no doubt, than half the Java's marines. However, to avoid as much as possible an over-estimate, the Constitution's complement, on commencing action with the Java, will be considered as 477 men, and 3 boys. Some of the former had belonged to the Iphigenia; others to the Guerriere; and 40 or 50 were recognised as English. It need hardly be added, that the men, generally, were prime seamen; and the crew, altogether, a remarkably fine one.

The Java, as stated before, was originally a French ship. She measured as follows:—

	Ft.	In.
Length of lower-deck, from rabbit to rabbit,	152	5½
Breadth, extreme,	39	11⅛

So trifling is the difference in size, between the Java and the other two captured frigates, that a reference to what has already appeared on the subject of comparative dimensions, will fully suffice. The circumstance related about the slight effect produced upon the Constitution's masts by the Java's shot, can be better understood, now that the relative stoutness of the two main-masts has been shewn. (See p. 112.)

Comparative force of the two ships.

		Java.	Constitution.
Broadside-metal in pounds,	l. guns,	261	384
	carr.	274	370
		— 535	— 754
Complement,	men,	347	477
	boys,	23	3
		— 370	— 480
Size in tons,		1073	1533

The only material difference observable between the comparative force in this action, and the Constitution and Guerriere's, is, in the *complement;* but, when we consider that the Guerriere's was an old, the Java's a new ship's company, with a much greater proportion of boys than appears in the above statement, that difference becomes merely nominal.

Taking into view the loss and damage sustained by the Constitution, and the obstinate defence of the Java, against so superior a force, such as may have been disappointed at the result of the other two frigate-actions with the Americans, will not deny, surely, that, in this of the Java and Constitution, the honor of the British flag was nobly maintained.

Before quitting the Java entirely, it will tend to illustrate the subject, to bestow a few observations upon the action between H. M. S. Amelia, Captain Irby, and the French frigate l'Arethuse.

This action was fought on the night of the 7th of February, 1813, off *l'Isles de Los*, on the

African coast. Captain Bouvet's official account has been received in England, and a translation of it has appeared in print. (Nav. Chron. vol. xxix. p. 293.) The British and French accounts agree as to the time when the action commenced, but differ a trifle as to the period of its duration: the mean of the two accounts fixes this at 3 hours and 26 minutes; very little short of the Java's. As to the manner in which the action terminated, the two commanders differ materially. Captain Irby says:—"She (l'Arethuse) bore up, having the advantage of being able to do so, leaving us in an ungovernable state."—Captain Bouvet says:—"We were no longer in good condition, and the enemy, crouding all sail, abandoned the field of battle to us."—It may be considered, then, as a *drawn battle*. Whichever ship had lost her masts, must have struck her flag. The Amelia's killed amounted to 51; her wounded to 95. The two cartels having on board the surviving officers and crew of the Java, fell in with l'Arethuse, after her action with the Amelia. Lieutenant Chads, having, while a prisoner at the isle of France, known Captain Bouvet, who then commanded there, and bore a very high character, went on board l'Arethuse; and was shewn a list of 31 killed, and 74 wounded, in her action with the Amelia. It is probable, that most of the slightly wounded had, by this time, recovered; and were therefore not noticed.

It is due to the veracity of a British officer to state, that "Captain Irby, in his dispatch to the admiralty," does *not* mention l'Arethuse's consort, le Rubis, "as being in sight just before the commencement of the action." (Naval Chron. vol. xxix. p. 383.) On the contrary, after detailing the proceedings of the 6th, he says:— "And the next morning, one of the frigates (I believe l'Arethuse) was just visible from the deck."

The Amelia's armament was the same as the Java's. The British officers who were on board l'Arethuse, state that her main-deck guns were French 18s, not "24-pounders," as Captain Irby had been informed. The caliber of her carronades was not known. The carronades of la Traave, a fine 44-gun frigate, captured in October, 1813, consisted of sixteen 18-pounders.— Admit l'Arethuse to have had the same; and, adding one-eighth for the difference between French and English caliber, her broadside-weight of metal would amount to 445 pounds; but, as l'Arethuse's carronades may have been 24s or 32s, it is fair to consider the two ships as equal in guns, or broadside-weight of metal.

The Amelia, like the Java, had a number of supernumeraries on board; but, owing to the general sickness of the men, Captain Irby says: —"We had barely our complement fit for duty, and they much enervated." A sickly old, and a healthy new ship's company, are about equal

in effectiveness. Captain Bouvet admits that he had in the action, an officer and boat's crew of le Rubis: say, in all, 340 men. Three days after the action, he took out of a Portuguese prize, in which the captain and crew of le Rubis had embarked after she became wrecked on the 6th, half that ship's complement; and the officers of the Java have stated, that l'Arethuse had, when they fell in with her, about 400 as fine seamen as ever sailed out of France. L'Arethuse, therefore, was not filled with conscripts and raw hands, in number crowding each other; but had a fair complement of experienced seamen, and good artillerists. Captain Bouvet particularly designates one of her officers as—"corporal of marine-artillery."

Referring to the relative numbers of killed on board the Amelia, and even the Macedonian instead of the Java; and taking into consideration the decided superiority of the Macedonian's antagonist, and the equality in force between the Amelia and l'Arethuse, we cannot but see how greatly the French crew excelled the American, in the "precision of their fire." (App. No. 19.) Nor did Captain Irby's men perform badly; as the killed of l'Arethuse sufficiently testify.

The Amelia, like the Java, had been a French ship, (la Proserpine,) and measured within a few tons of the Java; and, as if still to continue the similitude, Captain Bouvet stated l'Arethuse

to be a sister-ship to la Renommée, taken in 1811; which ship, unknown to him, was the identical Java.

It is clear that the French captain, when he engaged the Amelia, had heard nothing of the Java's loss. Previous to his leaving France, he very probably had of the Guerriere's. Without considering these things, the British journals were declaiming, at a fine rate, about the new spirit infused into the French marine, by the success of the Americans.

The action of the Amelia and l'Arethuse should have taught the Americans, not to overrate their abilities; not to deal so much in the bombastic, when recounting their "brilliant exploits upon the water." They might have seen that, had Captain Bouvet kept off at first, and tried to fall his adversary's masts; or even been provided with some of those curious shot that fell out of the Java's foremast, the Amelia would, in all probability, have been his. But l'Arethuse approached boldly, within pistol-shot; slaughtered more, but disabled less, than the Constitution. There was no manœuvring to avoid close action; no yawing away in the smoke; no unusual shot employed; no riflemen picking off the British officers:—"all," says Captain Irby, "fell by fair fighting."

CHAPTER VIII.

British official account of the Peacock and Hornet's action not published.—American details of it—Captain Lawrence's time corrected—Peacock sinks—l'Espeigle not in sight—American print of the action—Peacock's loss—Hornet's damages and loss—Peacock's force in guns and men—Hornet's force in guns—Complement fixed—Relative size of the Peacock and Hornet fully considered—Statement of comparative force—Hornet's challenge to the Bonne Citoyenne—Captain Greene's reply—Unhandsome behaviour of the commanders of the Constitution and Hornet upon the occasion.

OF the action between H. M. late brig Peacock, and the U. S. ship Hornet, no British official account has been published. Fortunately, a gross misstatement which appeared on the subject, in the New York "Commercial Advertiser," of the 16th of April, 1813, called forth a reply, in the same public manner, from the Peacock's late first lieutenant. (App. No. 30.) This counter-statement must serve, in lieu of a British official account, to contrast with the

official letter of Captain Lawrence. (App. No. 29.)

The action was fought on the 24th of February, 1813, close to the entrance of the Demarara river; and continued, according to Captain Lawrence, "less than 15 minutes;" but, "by Peacock's time, for 25 minutes;" when the British vessel, being totally cut to pieces, and in danger of sinking, hoisted a signal of distress at her fore-rigging. Shortly afterwards, the brig's main-mast went by the board.

As a proof that the Peacock could do no more, however well disposed her officers and crew may have been, she sank, in a few minutes after the action; carrying down, according to Captain Lawrence, thirteen of her own, and three of the Hornet's crew; but, of the former, four were afterwards saved by the enemy's boats. Another four of the Peacock's crew took to her stern-boat, just as the action ended; and arrived in safety at Demarara.

Captain Lawrence states that H. M. brig l'Espiegle was "about six miles in shore of him; and could plainly see the whole of the action." But Lieutenant Wright's letter is equally positive, "that H. B. M. brig l'Espeigle was not visible from the look-outs stationed at the Peacock's mast-heads, for some time previous to the action." (App. No. 30.) A court-martial has since been holden upon Captain John Taylor,

of l'Espeigle, at the instance of the admiralty; and one of the charges was, for "failing in his duty, when in pursuit of the Hornet American sloop, after the capture of the Peacock." Of this charge he was acquitted.

In the engraving of this action, given in the "Naval Monument," l'Espeigle appears scarcely two miles from the spot; and, although the Peacock is represented with part of her hull under water, the remainder shews as many ports as she had upon her whole side!

Captain Peake, the gallant commander of the Peacock, was killed at the early, not "the latter part" of the action. She lost, also, four seamen killed; her master, a midshipman, the carpenter, and captain's clerk, and 29 seamen and marines, wounded; of whom three died, soon after being removed to the Hornet; total 38.

The damages of the Hornet are represented as trifling. One shot went through the fore-mast, and the bowsprit was slightly injured; but her hull suffered little or no injury. The Americans acknowledge a loss of only two men killed, and three wounded.

The Peacock was originally armed with 32-pound carronades; but Captain Peake, considering her scantling as too slight to bear them, got 24s in exchange. She had two long sixes instead of "nines"; and, admitting she had "a 12-pound carronade on her top-gallant-fore-

castle," and a swivel or two, it is denied that she had "one four or six-pounder."

The Peacock had long been the admiration of her numerous visitors, for the tasteful arrangement of her deck; and had obtained, in consequence, the name of the *yacht*. The breechings of the carronades were lined with white canvass; the shot-lockers shifted from their usual places; and nothing could exceed, in brilliancy, the polish upon the traversing-bars and elevating screws. If carronades, in general, as mounted in the British service, are liable to turn in-board or upset, what must have been the state of the Peacock's carronades after the first broadside?—The captain of l'Espeigle, attached to the same station, was, at his court-martial, found guilty of "neglecting to exercise the ship's company at the great guns."—A single discharge from the Peacock's carronades, in exercise, would have betrayed the very defective state of their fastenings; and our feelings might then have found some relief in the skill, as well as gallantry, evinced in her defence.

Captain Lawrence says:—"I find, by her quarter-bill, that her crew consisted of 134 men, four of whom were absent in a prize." The Peacock's officers declare that she had, "at the time she engaged the Hornet, a complement of 122 men and boys;" which, without the four men that were absent, was one above her established

number. Of these, seventeen were boys. When we consider that the Peacock had been long on a West India station, it cannot be surprising, that the chief part of the crew were convalescents; although it is so, that she should have had her full complement on board.

According to the British lieutenant's letter, the Hornet mounted eighteen carronades, 32-pounders, and two long 9-pounders; but several American papers have stated her long guns as twelves.

In fixing the Hornet's complement of men in the action, there will not be much difficulty. Lieutenant Wright says she had 170 men; and that is now known to have been the establishment, exclusive of supernumeraries, of United States' vessels rating, like the Hornet, of "18 guns." Captain Lawrence states, that his master and seven men were absent in a prize; and that he mustered, on the day after the action, "270 souls, including the crew of the American brig Hunter, of Portland, taken a few days before by the Peacock."

It was very kind of Captain Lawrence to give the number of souls mustered. Relying upon that, the following statement will shew, clearly, that the Hornet must have had, in her action with the Peacock, 165 men; making, with the eight absent, a complement of 173; supernumeraries included.

Peacock's complement ofmen and boys,		122
Killed in action, and died after removing,	8	
Drowned,	9	
Escaped in the boat,	4	
	—	21
Peacock's surviving crew,		101
Brig Hunter's ship's company, exclusive of master and mate,		9
Hornet's original complement,	173	
Absent in a prize,	8	
Present in action,	165	
Killed and died of wounds,	2	
Drowned,	3	
	— 5	
Hornet's surviving crew,		160
Number of souls mustered,		270

The Hornet had three lieutenants, a lieutenant of marines, and a great shew of midshipmen. Her crew were all picked men; many of whom had belonged to her from the time she was commissioned. No boys were seen on board, yet two will be allowed. The exclusion of all men "on the sick list," in both crews, would be much more in favour of the Peacock than the Hornet.

The Peacock was built in 1807; upon the same model as the Frolic, and all the other

British 18-gun brigs. Captain Lawrence, sensible that the Peacock would not rise up from the deep to confront him, says:—"I should judge her to be about the tonnage of the Hornet. Her beam was greater by five inches, but her extreme length not so great by four feet."

The first question that arises is;—if the Peacock sank so soon after the action, that several men were drowned in her, what time had the Hornet's people to measure her *length* and *breadth?*—The dimensions which the Peacock's carpenter, if asked for them, could have furnished the Hornet's commander, would have been precisely the same as those which will be presently given.

By dint of a little scrutiny into American statements, the dimensions of the Hornet can be obtained with tolerable accuracy. Captain Biddle, who commanded her when, at a subsequent day, she captured the Penguin, the Peacock's sister-brig, stated his prize to be "two feet shorter upon deck," and to have "greater breadth," than the Hornet. Fortunately, the American officers, anxious to shew what an extraordinary large brig they had captured, published in a New York paper, the Penguin's "length on deck," and "breadth of beam;" making the former "110 feet," the latter "31 feet 6 inches."—The absurdity of this will be shewn, when we arrive at the Penguin's action:

at present, the figures are all we want.—The Hornet's "length on deck," then, is admitted to be 112 feet. Let us take Captain Lawrence's "five inches" as the difference between the Hornet's breadth, and the "31 feet 6 inches," stated to have been the Penguin's breadth; although the expression "greater breadth" would almost imply, that the excess was so trifling, as to be not worth computing. This would give for the Hornet's breadth, 31 feet 1 inch; only 3 inches more than that of the Wasp; a ship six, instead of "two, feet shorter upon deck than the Hornet."

These dimensions will make the Hornet 450 tons only; whereas, one of the lieutenants of the late U. S. ship Frolic, who had served in the same capacity on board the Hornet, described her as very little inferior in size to the Frolic; and she is 539 tons.

Dimensions of the two vessels.

	Peacock, brig.		Hornet, ship.	
	Ft.	In.	Ft.	In.
Length of deck, from rabbit to rabbit,	100	3	112	0
Breadth, extreme,	30	7	31	1

Some opinion may be formed of the stoutness of the Hornet's scantling by that of the Wasp; (see p. 152;) and the former's masts and yards are described as very little inferior in size to those of the late American ship Frolic; now the Florida in our service.

Comparative force of the two vessels.

		Peacock.		Hornet.	
Broadside-metal in pounds,	long guns,	6		9	
	carronades,	192		288	
			198		297
Complement,	men,	105		163	
	boys,	17		2	
			122		165
Size in tons,			386		450

The Americans, now, for the first time declared, "that 24-pounders were as good as 32s"; and that, therefore, the two sloops, (although in relative broadside-metal, exactly as 3 to 2,) were "equally matched." Improving upon this, the editor of the "Naval Monument" says, plumply, "the Hornet shivered her *superior* antagonist to atoms."

Previous to his action with the Peacock, Captain Lawrence took advantage of another fortunate event that occurred to the Hornet. H. M. S. Bonne Citoyenne, Captain Pitt B. Greene, with half a million sterling on board, which she had brought from Rio de la Plata, was lying in St. Salvador, at the time the U. S. ships Constitution and Hornet were cruizing off the port. A king's packet, bound to England, was also detained there, by the presence of those ships.

The Constitution and Hornet anchored in the harbour; and their respective commanders were frequently at the house of Mr. Hill, the Ameri-

can consul; a man of notorious Anti-british feelings. The nature of the Bonne Citoyenne's cargo was well understood by all the merchants (of which the consul was one) at St. Salvador; and both Commodore Bainbridge and Captain Lawrence, as professional men, knew that the British commander dared not engage in a different service, from that upon which he had been ordered.

The consul, and the two American commanders, laid their heads together, to contrive something that, without any personal risk to either, should contribute to the renown of their common country. What so likely as a challenge to Captain Greene?—It could not be accepted; and then the refusal would be as good as a victory to Captain Lawrence. Accordingly, a challenge for the Hornet to meet the Bonne Citoyenne, was offered by Captain Lawrence, through the American to the British consul, Mr. Frederick Landeman. (App. Nos. 32. and 33.)

Without making the unpleasant avowal, that his government had, upon this occasion, reduced the vessel he commanded from a king's cruizer to a merchant-ship, Captain Green transmitted, through the consular channel, an animated reply; refusing a meeting "upon terms so manifestly disadvantageous as those proposed by Commodore Bainbridge." (App. Nos. 34. and 35.) Indeed, it would appear, as if the

commodore had purposely inserted the words, "or not interfering," lest Captain Greene should, contrary to expectation, have accepted the challenge. For, had the two ships met by agreement, engaged, the Constitution looked on "without interfering," and the British ship been the conqueror, the pledge of "honor" on the part of both American commanders, would have been fulfilled: and can any one, for a moment imagine, that Commodore Bainbridge would have seen the Bonne Citoyenne carry off a United States ship of war, without attempting her rescue?—It was more than his head was worth.—Where was the guarantee against recapture, which always accompanies *serious* proposals of this sort, when a stronger force, belonging to either party, is to preserve a temporary neutrality?—Let the commander of the Montague 74, have made the same proposal to the Hornet, pledging his "honor not to interfere;" and see how deservedly he would have been ridiculed, not by Americans only, but by the whole of his countrymen.

Commodore Bainbridge, in his public letter, says: "The Bonne Citoyenne is a larger vessel, and of greater force in guns and men than the Hornet."—She is, certainly, a trifle larger; but, it is believed, mounted the same number and description of guns, with the addition of a boat-carronade. Her complement was twenty-

five men less than the Hornet's; but her crew *had* been exercised at the guns, were well disposed, and commanded by a gallant officer.

Captain Lawrence's boast of his having blockaded the Bonne Citoyenne, and a packet, until the Montague chased the Hornet off, was well calculated to exalt him in the opinion of his friends; but what assurance had Captain Greene, that Commodore Bainbridge, as well apprized of the Bonne Citoyenne's destination, as of the nature of her cargo, was not cruizing in the offing. The British ship would have been a rich prize, indeed; and her commander most justly laughed at, had he become the dupe of so shallow an artifice. The blockade of the Bonne Citoyenne and packet by the Hornet, was a fine subject for the painter. Accordingly, the "Naval Monument" contains a clumsy wood-cut, representing the transaction in all its brilliancy.

That the American consul at St. Salvador should have been ungenerous enough to reduce a British officer to the necessity of refusing, under any circumstances, to meet a ship of his own class, creates no surprise whatever. But who could expect that two national officers, aware of the delicate situation in which a brother-officer, though a political enemy, was placed, would have urged the unhandsome request; much more, have triumphed over the answer, which they knew it was his duty to give?

CHAPTER IX.

Shannon and Tenedos reconnoitre Boston—Chesapeake gets in unperceived—President and Congress avoid the blockading ships, and escape to sea—Captain Broke detaches the Tenedos—Receives on board twenty two Irish labourers—Challenges the Chesapeake, and stands close in to Boston light-house—Chesapeake sails out, without receiving the challenge—The two ships engage—Details of the action—American spectators—Lieutenant Budd's official letter—Shannon's damages and loss—Chesapeake's also—Shannon's force, in guns and men—American method of computing a ship's complement—Chesapeake's force in guns—Names of her guns—Dismantling shot—Effects of her langridge on the Shannon's wounded—Cask of lime—a curious case on the subject—Chesapeake's complement—Difficulty of ascertaining it—The number fixed—Quality of the crew—American remarks thereon—Dimensions of the two ships, in hull and spars—Statement of comparative force—Remarks thereon.

ON the 2d of April, 1813, H. M. S. Shannon, 46, Captain Broke, accompanied by the Tenedos, 46, Captain Parker, reconnoitered the har-

bour of Boston, and discovered lying there, the U. S. frigate Congress ready for sea, President nearly so, and Constitution under repair.

On the 13th, the U. S. frigate Chesapeake, Captain Evans, got into Boston, through the eastern passage, unperceived by either of the British frigates; and, on the 1st of May, foggy weather, and a sudden favourable shift of wind, enabled the President, Commodore Rodgers, and Congress, Captain Smith, to avoid the Shannon and Tenedos, and escape to sea. The American accounts say, with a very grave air, that the British frigates sailed from the coast, purposely to avoid the commodore.

Having ascertained that the Chesapeake would soon be ready for sea again, Captain Broke, on the 25th of May, took a supply of provisions and water from the Tenedos; and detached her, with orders to Captain Parker, not to rejoin him before the 14th of June; the earliest date, at which, it was considered, the Constitution could be got ready to accompany the Chesapeake, should the latter wait in port for that purpose.

On the 26th of May, the Shannon recaptured the brig Lucy, and on the 29th, the brig William; both belonging to Halifax. A meeting with the Chesapeake being now Captain Broke's sole purpose, nothing but the circumstance of those vessels belonging to the port of Halifax, could induce him to weaken the Shannon's crew,

by sending them in. The master of the Lucy, and five recaptured men-of-war's-men, took her in charge; and a midshipman and four of the Shannon's men, the William.

On the afternoon of the 30th, the Shannon fell in with the British privateer-brig, Sir John Sherbrooke. This vessel had on board fifty two Irish labourers, taken three days previous out of the captured American privateer, Governor Plumer; which vessel had captured the ship Duck, from Waterford to Burin, Newfoundland; having on board these men as passengers. The commander of the Sir John Sherbrooke had persuaded thirty of the latter to join his vessel; and the remaining twenty-two were now pressed into the Shannon.

Early on Monday morning, Captain Broke addressed to the commanding-officer of the Chesapeake, a letter of challenge; which, for candour, spirit, and gentlemanly style, has rarely been equalled. (App. No. 36.) This letter was confided to a Captain Slocum, a discharged prisoner; who immediately departed in his boat for Marblehead, a port a few miles north of Boston. At the same time, the Shannon, with colours flying, stood in close to the light-house; and there lay-to. She had been as near to Boston during several of the preceding days; but thick rainy weather had obstructed the view of the harbour. The Chesa-

peake was now seen at anchor in President Roads, with royal yards across; and apparently ready for sea. She presently loosed her fore-top-sail; and, shortly afterwards, all her top-sails, and sheeted them home. But, from the wind being perfectly fair, and the ship not getting under way, the Shannon's people began to fear that she was not inclined to come out.

Between twelve and one, while the men were at dinner, Captain Broke went himself to the mast-head; and there observed the Chesapeake fire a gun, and loose and set top-gallant-sails. She was soon under way; and made more sail as she came down; having a light breeze in her favor. While aloft, Captain Broke saw that Captain Slocum's boat had not reached the shore in time for the delivery of his letter of challenge to the commander of the Chesapeake.

The Shannon now filled, and stood out from the land under easy sail, till 4 o'clock; when, the Chesapeake having hauled up, and fired a gun, as if in defiance, the Shannon hauled up also, and reeved top-sails. Both ships, now about seven miles distant, again bore away; the Shannon with her fore-sail brailed up, and her main-top-sail braced flat, and shivering, that the Chesapeake might overtake her. At a few minutes past 5, Boston light-house bearing west, distant about six leagues, the Shannon again hauled up, with her head to the south-

ward and eastward; and lay-to, under top-sails, top-gallant-sails, jib, and spanker; having barely steerage-way.

The Chesapeake came down upon the Shannon's starboard-quarter, with three ensigns flying: one at the mizen-royal-mast-head, one at the peak, and one in the starboard-main-rigging. She had, also, flying at the fore, a large white flag, inscribed with the words:—"FREE TRADE AND SAILORS' RIGHTS;"—upon a supposition, perhaps, that that favorite American motto would paralize the efforts, or damp the energy, of the Shannon's men.—The Shannon had only an old rusty blue ensign at the peak; nor was her outside appearance at all calculated to inspire a belief, of the order and discipline that reigned within. Captain Broke thought, at one time, that the Chesapeake would pass under his stern, and engage him upon the larboard-side; he therefore ordered his men, as she passed, to lay down flat, so as to avoid, in some degree, the raking fire. But Captain Lawrence, either overlooking or waving this advantage, at 30 minutes past 5, gallantly luffed up, within half-pistol-shot, upon the Shannon's starboard quarter.

The Shannon's men had received orders, to fire as their guns would bear; and to aim principally at the enemy's ports. The first and second shot were discharged from the aftermost

main-deck gun, and quarter-deck carronade; just as the Chesapeake, while rounding-to, brought her fore-mast in a line with the Shannon's mizen-mast. These two shot were distinctly heard before the Chesapeake commenced firing; and, by the American account, both shot took effect; killing and wounding several officers and men. The Chesapeake discharged her whole broad-side in return; which was replied to by the Shannon's guns, as fast as the men could level them with precision.

In about seven minutes from the commence-ment of the action, the Chesapeake, having her jib-sheet and fore-top-sail-tie shot away, fell on board the Shannon; the fluke of the latter's waist anchor, (which, to assist in trimming the ship, had been stowed in the main-chains,) en-tering the former's quarter-gallery window. The shot from the Shannon's aftermost guns, now had a fair range along the Chesapeake's decks; beating in the stern-ports, and sweeping the men from their quarters. The shot from the foremost guns, at the same time entering the ports from the main-mast aft, did considera-ble execution.

When about 10 minutes had elapsed, an open cask of musket-cartridges, standing upon the Chesapeake's cabin-sky-light for the use of the marines, caught fire and blew up; but did no injury whatever. Even the spanker-boom, di-

rectly in the way of the explosion, was barely singed. The Chesapeake's head had, by this time, fallen off; so that she lay close alongside the Shannon; the latter's main-mast being nearly in a line with her opponent's taffrail.

Captain Broke now saw that the Chesapeake's quarter-deck division were deserting their guns. He instantly called out—"Board!" and, accompanied by the first lieutenant and 20 men, sprang upon the Chesapeake's quarter-deck. Here not an officer or man was to be seen. Upon her gangways, about 20 Americans made a slight resistance. These were instantly driven towards the forecastle; where a few endeavoured to get down the fore-hatchway, but in their eagerness prevented each other; a few fled over the bows, and reached the main-deck through the bridle-ports; and the remainder laid down their arms, and submitted.

Between 30 and 40 of the Shannon's marines quickly followed the first boarding party. These kept down the men who were ascending the main-hatchway; and answered a spirited fire, still continued from the main and mizen tops. The Chesapeake's fore-top was, in the mean time, stormed by Midshipman Smith and his top-men, about five in number; who either destroyed or drove on deck, all the Americans there stationed. This gallant young man had deliberately passed along the Shannon's fore-

yard, which was braced up, to the Chesapeake's, also braced up; and thence into her top.

After those upon the forecastle had submitted, Captain Broke ordered one of his men to stand sentry over them; and sent most of the others aft, where the conflict was still going on. He was in the act of giving them orders to answer the fire from the Chesapeake's main-top, when the sentry called lustily out to him. On turning round, the captain found himself opposed by three of the Americans; who, seeing they were superior to the British then near them, had armed themselves a-fresh. Captain Broke parried the middle fellow's pike, and wounded him in the face; but instantly received from the man on the pikeman's right, a blow with the butt-end of a musket, which bared his scull, and nearly stunned him. Determined to finish the British commander, the third man cut him down with his broad-sword; and, at that very instant, was himself cut down by one of the Shannon's seamen. Captain Broke and his treacherous foe now lay side by side; each, although nearly powerless, struggling to regain his sword; when a marine dispatched the American with his bayonet. Captain Broke was not the only sufferer upon this occasion; one of his men was killed, and two or three were wounded. Can it be wondered, if all that were concerned in this breach of faith, fell victims to the indig-

nation of the Shannon's men? It was as much as their commander could do, to save from their fury a young midshipman, who, having slid down a rope from the Chesapeake's fore-top, begged his protection. Mr. Smith, who had also descended from the fore-top, and a seaman, were at this time helping the captain on his legs. The seaman, while tying a handkerchief round his commander's head, called out, (pointing aft,)—"There, sir, there goes up the old ensign over the Yankee colours." The captain saw it hoisting; and was instantly led to the quarter-deck; where he seated himself upon one of the carronade-slides.

The gallant first lieutenant of the Shannon was struck on the head with a grape-shot from one of that ship's fore-mast guns, while in the act of hoisting the British colours over the American. Another gun was discharged, unfortunately, before the officer commanding that division, knew of the Chesapeake's surrender; and three or four of the Shannon's men shared the lamented fate of Mr. Watt, besides several being wounded.

Even after the British colours were flying on board the Chesapeake, some of her men kept firing up the main-hatchway, and killed a British marine. It was then, and not till then, that Lieutenant Falkiner, who was sitting on the booms, very properly directed three or four

muskets that were ready, to be fired down. Captain Broke, from his seat upon the carronade-slide, told him to summon them to surrender, if they desired quarter. He did so: they replied—"We surrender;" and all hostility ceased. Soon after this, Captain Broke's senses failed him from loss of blood; and, the Shannon's jolly-boat arriving with a supply of men, (the two ships having separated, owing to the Chesapeake's quarter-gallery giving way,) he was carried on board his own ship.

Between the discharge of the first gun, and the period of Captain Broke's boarding, 11 minutes only elapsed; and, in 4 minutes more, the Chesapeake was completely his. Hundreds of spectators from Boston, and the surrounding neighbourhood, holding their watches in their hands, were astonished at the speedy termination of the firing; and the fact of the Shannon's first lieutenant having been killed by a cannon-shot, as he was hoisting the colours on board the Chesapeake, clearly proves, that the firing did not cease till the very moment of victory.

What a happy circumstance it was that, during the whole of this doubly-auspicious day, no British cruizer, public or private, came in sight. If we except a very numerous assemblage of American pleasure-yachts, and a few gun-boats, the two frigates had the offing to themselves. At about 8 o'clock in the evening,

the prisoners being divided, and properly secured, the British ship, and her fine prize, bent their course for Halifax; where they arrived in perfect safety on the Sunday following; being the fifth day after the action.

The "Report of the court of inquiry on the loss of the Chesapeake" (App. No. 40) grounds a string of suppositions upon "the cautious manner in which the enemy came on board."—Had the court tried to invest its proceedings with an air of ridicule, could it possibly have succeeded better, than by making such an assertion?

Let us see how the editor of the "Naval History" describes the boarding-attempt. He says:—"The bugleman, who should have called the boarders, as ordered by Captain Lawrence, did not do his duty. The Shannon had sustained so much injury, that her commander, Commodore Brooke, was preparing to repel any attempt of boarding from the Chesapeake; but, at this moment, Brooke, perceiving the havoc his fire had occasioned on the deck of the Chesapeake, jumped on board her with about 20 men. They would soon have been driven back, but all the officers on deck were either killed or wounded. The second lieutenant, Budd, who commanded the first division below, led up the boarders; but only 15 or 20 men followed him. With these he defended the ship until disabled

by a wound. Lieutenant Ludlow, though wounded, hurried on deck, where he soon received a mortal sabre-wound; 60 additional men being thrown on board from the Shannon, the crew of the Chesapeake, who had no officer to direct and rally them, were overpowered. The Chesapeake, however, was not surrendered by an act of submission, but was taken possession of by a force that overwhelmed all opposition." (N. Hist. vol. i. p. 205.)

"Jumped on board her with about 20 men."—This is a specimen of the "cautious manner" in which the British boarded. After confessing that "the crew of the Chesapeake," then consisting of, at least, 340 men, quite unhurt, "were overpowered" by 80 British, Mr. Clarke gravely adds:—"The Chesapeake, however, was not surrendered by an act of submission, but was taken possession of by a force that overwhelmed all opposition"!

Aware of this inconsistency in Mr. Clarke's statement, the "Sketches of the War" makes the 80 British "200." The same work assures its readers, that Captain Broke boarded, because he was "apprehensive of the Shannon's sinking"; and ascribes the Chesapeake's not capturing her "superior enemy" to the blowing up of the arm-chest.

Mr. Budd, the Chesapeake's second lieutenant, has made his official letter nearly as short as

the action. (App. No. 39.) He gives both "A. Ms. and "P. Ms. before the combat began; but, afterwards, finds it his interest to be less precise. His assertion that the arm-chest "was blown up by a hand-grenade thrown from the enemy's ship," is utterly false. No hand-grenade whatever was thrown from the Shannon; although she had on board about a dozen in all. Mr. Budd wrote his letter fifteen days after the action; and must have made the assertion, knowing it to be false. It is probable, he took the hint from the paragraphs about the "infernal machine," &c. contained in the Boston papers describing the action; which papers had reached Halifax about two days before the date of his letter.

The "court of inquiry" makes a fine story of the firing down the hatchway. Not a word is there of the "magnanimous conquered foe" having fired from below, in the first instance, and killed a British marine. Captain Broke will long have cause to remember the treatment he experienced from this "magnanimous conquered foe." So far, indeed, from the conduct of the British being "a most unwarrantable abuse of power after success," Lieutenant Cox of the Chesapeake, in the hearing of several English gentlemen, has since admitted, that he owed his life to the forbearance of one of the Shannon's marines. When the American officers

arrived on board the Shannon, and some of them were finding out reasons for being "taken so unaccountably," their first lieutenant, Ludlow, a gallant officer, and who fought hard in repelling the boarders, readily acknowledged, that the Shannon had beaten them *heartily* and *fairly*.

Five shot passed through the Shannon; one only below the main-deck: several struck, and most of them lodged in the starboard side, ranged in a line just above the copper. A long iron bar was seen sticking out of her copper. Until her shot-holes were stopped, the Shannon made a good deal of water, upon the larboard tack; but, upon the other, not more than usual. The "Report" actually states, that the Shannon "was reduced almost to a sinking condition."

The Shannon's fore and main-masts were slightly injured by shot; her bowsprit, previously sprung, and mizen-mast were badly wounded. No other spar was damaged. The Shannon carried a pole mizen top-mast; which, from its shortness, may have given rise to the assertion, among the boat-spectators, that her "mizen-royal-mast was shot away." The Shannon's rigging was very slightly injured. Notwithstanding these facts, the "Report" states the Shannon to have been "much cut in her spars and rigging."

The Shannon, besides her first lieutenant, lost the purser, captain's clerk, 20 seamen, marines,

and supernumeraries, and 1 boy, killed; her commander, boatswain, a midshipman, and 56 seamen, marines, and supernumeraries, wounded; of whom 24, including the captain and boatswain, (the latter since dead,) were severely wounded; total killed and wounded 83. Three of the Irish supernumeraries fell in the action. To say that these rough sons of Erin, amidst the new and awful scene they were exposed to, behaved gallantly, would be superfluous, considering the land they came from. Perhaps their native valor received a slight stimulus, from the harsh treatment they had experienced, while on board the American privateer.

The Chesapeake was severely battered in her hull, on the starboard quarter particularly. A shot passed through one of her transoms; (equal in stoutness to a 64-gun ship's;) and several shot entered the stern-windows. She had two main-deck guns, and one carronade, entirely disabled. One 32-pound carronade was dismounted; and several carriages and slides were broken. Yet, says the "Report,"—"the Chesapeake was comparatively uninjured."

Her three lower-masts, especially the main and mizen-masts, were badly wounded. The bowsprit received no injury; nor was a spar of any kind shot away. Her lower-rigging and stays were a good deal cut; but neither masts nor rigging were so damaged, that they could

not have been repaired, if necessary, without going into port.

Dreadful was the slaughter on board the Chesapeake. She lost her master, a lieutenant of marines, 3 midshipmen, and at least 56 petty-officers, seamen, and marines, killed; her gallant commander and first lieutenant, also her second, third, and fourth lieutenants, 4 midshipmen, and 106 petty-officers, seamen and marines, wounded; of whom, Captain Lawrence, Lieutenants Ludlow and Brome, one or two midshipmen, and several of the men, died of their wounds: total killed 61; wounded, (some of them very slightly,) 115; which comprises every one that reported himself to the Shannon's surgeon, three days after the action. This makes the gross number of killed and wounded amount to 176. The Chesapeake's surgeon, without, of course, noticing the very slightly wounded, writes from Halifax: "The whole number killed and wounded is estimated at about 160 to 170." Lieutenant Budd (without, it would appear, having any muster-roll in his possession,) gives the *names* of 47 killed, and 99 wounded. As the Americans talked much of an "explosion," the Shannon's surgeon was directed to examine their wounded: when he could find only one man at all burnt; and that was by the bursting of one of their powder-horns at a forecastle gun;—far enough from the explosion upon the quarter-deck.

After Mr. Clarke has told us of the Shannon's "destructive broadsides," and of three men being successively shot from the Chesapeake's wheel, he adds:—"The Chesapeake had evidently the advantage.—The greater part of the Americans were killed and wounded by the British boarders. The loss of the Shannon was principally occasioned by the cannon of the Chesapeake."—And the "court of inquiry" has decreed, "that the fire of the Chesapeake was much superior to that of the Shannon"!

The Shannon mounted twenty eight long 18-pounders upon the main-deck; upon the quarter-deck, twelve carronades, 32-pounders, two long 9-pounders, a 12-pound launch carronade through the fore-most starboard port, and a long brass 6-pounder through the opposite one; also two additional 12-pound carronades through the stern-ports; and, upon the forecastle, four carronades, 32-pounders, and two long 9-pounders; total, as the "Report" says,—"52 carriage guns:" besides a small swivel in the fore, and another in the main-top. The two stern-chase carronades had been frequently placed in the hold; where, as they were utterly useless in the broadside, and yet encreased the ship's nominal force, they had much better have remained. The Shannon, although she had, in all, 52 guns, (and those of five different calibers,) mounted, there-

fore, no more than 25 guns upon her broadside, including her boat-gun.

Captain Broke, in his letter of challenge, says, "The Shannon mounts twenty-four guns upon her broadside, and one light boat-gun; 18-pounders on her main-deck, and 32-pounder carronades on her quarter-deck and forecastle." If there is here any variation from the fact, it is that, instead of having, without her boat-gun, an upper broadside-battery of all "32-pounders," as the statement implies, the Shannon had, among them, two 9-pounders. Yet the editor of the American "Portefolio," has had the assurance to complain of Captain Broke, for having "under-rated his ship's force."

The Shannon went into action with 276 officers, seamen and marines, of her proper complement, 8 recaptured seamen, 22 Irish labourers, who had been but forty eight hours in the ship, and 24 boys; of whom about 13 were under twelve years of age. The Irish supernumeraries had never been at sea, till they took passage in the Duck; and only four of them could speak English. We must, however, add them to the Shannon's complement; which they therefore swelled up to 330.

The Shannon's complement having been originally made up of draughts from different ships, the men were, at first, very quarrelsome among

themselves; but Captain Broke's judicious plan of discipline, aided by his fatherly conduct, soon reconciled all parties, and made them, what in truth they were, a fine ship's company.

The first Halifax account of the action estimated the Shannon's full complement at 335; including, by mistake, the midshipman and four men sent away in the brig William; and who had re-joined their ship, upon her arrival in Halifax. Now that fact is explained, we have another instance of correctness in Captain Broke's letter of challenge. He stated the Shannon's complement to consist of "330 men and boys:"—yet, say the Americans, "he under-rated his ship's force."

Lieutenant Budd, in his letter, says:—"The Shannon had, in addition to her full complement, an officer and sixteen men belonging to the Belle Poule, and a part of the crew belonging to the Tenedos." (App. No. 39.)—It appears that Mr. Budd, while on board the Shannon, observed three or four of the seamen's hats with "Tenedos" written in front. This is easily accounted for, when it is known, that the two ships had been cruizing together for three months; and had, of course, kept up a constant intercourse by boats. Suppose the U. S. frigate Congress, of the same force as the Chesapeake, had, at a subsequent day, sailed out from Portsmouth, N. Hampshire, to fight the Tenedos, (which ship,

singly, blockaded her for some weeks,) such another acute observer as Mr. Budd would, upon seeing some of the Shannon's hats on the seamen's heads, have declared that the Tenedos had, "in addition to her full complement, a part of the crew belonging to the Shannon."—Admitting, also, that seven, not "sixteen," of the Shannon's men, originally came from the Belle-Poule, what had that to do with the Shannon's complement in an action fought seven years afterwards? So that, all the draughted men a ship may receive on board, when manning for sea, are—"in addition to her full complement."—The Americans have another curious way of computing the complements of British ships; best illustrated by an anecdote. An American prisoner on parole near Halifax N. S. had the following conversation with an Englishman of the neighbourhood:—"Pray, what may be that frigate's complement?" pointing to one that had just anchored.—"About 302."—"What number of officers has she?"—"In all, about 63."—"Marines?"—"About 50." The American, then, after a short pause, turning to one of his countrymen present, says,—"They tell us the British don't half-man their ships, but I guess, our government would not think of giving to a ship like that, a greater complement than 415."—May not some calculation of this sort have been submitted to the "court of in-

quiry on the loss of the Chesapeake"?—The addition of the "63 officers," without the "marines," to the Shannon's "330 men and boys," amounts to very little short of "396;" the number appearing in the "Report," as the Shannon's complement.

After a writer in a Boston newspaper has insisted, that the "native Americans" on board the Chesapeake fought like heroes, and that the British part of the crew behaved treacherously, he very naturally asks—"Can any of your correspondents inform us, whether any Americans were on board the Shannon?"—Yes; there were some,—in her hold; though not so many, by several scores, as were in the Chesapeake's hold, in a very few seconds after the Shannon's 20 boarders sprang upon her quarter-deck.

The Chesapeake mounted twenty-eight long 18-pounders upon the main-deck; sixteen carronades, 32-pounders, upon the quarter-deck; four carronades, 32-pounders, and a long 18-pounder, shifting gun, upon the forecastle. Such an upper battery is possessed by no 18-pounder frigate in the British navy. The Chesapeake had, also, a 12-pound carronade; but it is doubtful whether or not it was mounted in the action. A very simple, and well contrived elevating carriage, and another for boat-service, belonged to it; but the carronade itself, quite

perfect, was found dismounted; and will not be estimated. The Chesapeake's proper armament, therefore, consisted of 50 guns; although, in the action, she had only 49 mounted. Of these, she fought 25 upon the broadside; the same as the Shannon. The Chesapeake had a spare port on each side of her forecastle, between the bow-port, and that through which she fought her shifting 18-pounder.

The Chesapeake's guns had all names, engraven on small squares of copper-plate. To give some idea of American taste in these matters, here follow the names of her guns upon one broadside: — Main-deck; "*Brother Jonathan*, *True Blue*, *Yankee Protection*, *Putnam*, *Raging Eagle*, *Viper*, *General Warren*, *Mad Anthony*, *America*, *Washington*, *Liberty for Ever*, *Dreadnought*, *Defiance*, *Liberty or Death.*"—Forecastle; "*United Tars*," shifting 18-pounder, "*Jumping Billy*, *Ratler*," carronades. Quarter-deck; "*Bull-dog*, *Spitfire*, *Nancy Dawson*, *Revenge*, *Bunker's Hill*, *Pocohantas*, *Towser*, *Wilful Murder*," carronades; total 25.

An immense quantity of the dismantling shot represented in the plate; as well of single iron bolts, crow-bars, broken marline-spikes, old iron, &c. were taken out of the Chesapeake. The whole mass, weighing nearly half a ton, was sold at auction in Halifax; and the greater

part has long since been converted into horse-shoes, plough-shares, and other articles of innocent utility.

A desire to torment, as well as to destroy, must have influenced the Americans; or why were the Chesapeake's canister-shot made up with angular and jagged pieces of iron, broken gun-locks, copper nails, &c.? Many of the Shannon's men suffered extremely by being so wounded; especially, during the tedious operation of extracting such abominable stuff from different parts of their bodies. Among the Chesapeake's small-arms, were found several rifle-guns; an additional proof that the Americans use them in their sea-fights.

A large cask of lime, with the head open, had been standing upon the Chesapeake's forecastle, but was knocked to pieces by one of the Shannon's shot. A bag of the same was found in the fore-top. Long after the Chesapeake arrived in Halifax, the remains of the lime were to be seen about the forecastle. For what precise use this lime was intended, has never been fully explained. The following relation of a circumstance, which took place before the use of gunpowder was known, may perhaps assist the reader in his conjectures.

"The French having invaded England, (Henry 3d, 1217,) Hubert de Burgh, governor of Dover Castle, discovering a fleet of 80 stout

ships standing over to the coast of Kent, put to sea with 40 ships, and having gained the wind of them, ran down several of the smaller ships, and closing with the others, *threw on board a quantity of quick-lime; which, blowing in their faces, blinded them so effectually*, that they found themselves obliged to bear away; but, being instantly boarded by the English, they were all either taken or sunk."—(*Scomberg's* Nav. Chronol. vol. i. p. 9.) That the Chesapeake's men made no such wicked use of the lime, is true; because that on the forecastle, being scattered by the shot, could not well injure any others than those standing round it; and Midshipman Smith, and his gallant followers, came too unexpectedly into the fore-top, to admit of the lime there placed, being used at all.

Now for the most difficult part in the estimate of an American ship's force: her complement of men on going into action.

Lieutenant George Budd, the surviving commanding officer of the Chesapeake, deposed, on the 19th of June, at the admiralty-office in Halifax, as follows:—"He does not know the number of hands on board at the time of capture, but will procure a copy of the muster-roll. He supposes there might have been about 340 hands on board at the time of capture."

This gentleman's official letter bears date four days previous to his deposition. In that letter,

he gives the names of "47 killed;" and this, before, as it would appear above, he had "procured a copy of the muster-roll." How happened Mr. Budd not to know, that the "number of hands" late belonging to the Chesapeake, mustered after the action, amounted to 333? Even the number upon the books of the agent for prisoners, at Halifax, after most of the mortally wounded had died, amounted to 326. To suppose him acquainted with these facts, at the time that he made his deposition, would be accusing him of, at least, a wilful absurdity; for, his "47 killed," added to the 333 prisoners, would make 380, instead of "about 340." It is thought that, by "hands," Mr. Budd meant, "exclusive of officers;" which amounted to 70, at least. In that case, we should have 410 for the Chesapeake's complement, on going into action. Two muster-rolls were found: one contained, after deducting the runnings and discharges, the names of 389; the other, written up to the morning of the action, of 391. Some of the discharges bore date on the very day before the action. There can be no doubt, therefore, that on the *morning* of the action, the Chesapeake had a complement of 391.

It was currently reported at Boston, that several volunteers joined the Chesapeake, as she was getting under way. Some of the petty-

officers, after their arrival at Melville-island prison, confessed that 30 or 40 hands, principally from the Constitution, came on board; but whose names, in the hurry and confusion, were not entered in the purser's books.

In corroboration of several men having joined the ship, a very short time before the action, a number of bags and hammocks were found lying in the boats, stowed over the booms; and, in direct proof that some of the Constitution's men were on board the Chesapeake, three or four of the Guerriere's Americans, who, after that ship's capture, enlisted on board the Constitution, (see p. 107,) were among the prisoners taken out of the Chesapeake; and were immediately recognised by their former shipmates, now, as stated before, serving on board the Shannon.

Even 440, the number given as the complement of the Chesapeake in Captain Broke's letter, was not founded on mere surmise. That number was known to have been her complement on a former occasion; (see p. 71;) and, after the Chesapeake had been several weeks in Halifax, a letter was found in one of her lockers, dated in 1811, from Robert Smith, Esq. the secretary of state at that time, to Captain Samuel Evans, at Boston; directing him to open houses of rendezvous for manning the Chesapeake; and enumerating the different classes, to the amount of 443. This, too, was in times

of profound peace; when no Shannon was cruizing, in defiance, off the harbour.

Again, the Congress, of the same force as the Chesapeake, arrived at Portsmouth, N. Hampshire, with (according to a published letter from one of her officers) 410 men of her crew on board; besides having lost four by death, and manned a prize with some others.

At the time the Chesapeake sailed out, the Constitution was lying in Boston, fully manned. So were several gun-boats, and one or two large privateers; and seamen were swarming in the town. Can it then, for a moment, be believed, that Captain Lawrence, knowing an enemy's frigate was waiting outside for him, would not take advantage of all this, and place on board his own ship an ample and effective crew? However, let the real number of the Chesapeake's crew have been what it may, the number upon the last-found muster-roll, is all that can, with propriety, appear in the statement of comparative force; and which number is thus accounted for:—

Killed in the action,	61	
Died in the passage.	4	
	—	65
Prisoners received by the agent,		326
Number upon the last-found muster-roll,		391

Among the prisoners, there were but ten dis-

tinguished by the American officers as boys; and only three that would come under that denomination on board a British ship of war. Seven, however, will be allowed.

The Chesapeake's gunner, Matthew Rogers, was an Irishman; the carpenter, George Miller, a native of Nova Scotia; and there were 34 others of the crew, recognized as British subjects. One man was hanged at Spithead; and several were pardoned. By some mismanagement, the first-named notorious traitor, Matthew Rogers, instead of being sent home for trial, was allowed to return, laughing in his sleeve, to his *adopted* country. A Boston journal, among other excuses for the Chesapeake's loss, contains some very amusing remarks about "the cowardice of some of the crew who were not Americans."—"There are no better sailors in the world," says the American editor, "than our own; and it seems hard that the war should be carried on for nothing but British sailors' rights, (!!) and that those same sailors should desert us in the moment of conflict. Cowardice is a species of treason. If renegado Englishmen are permitted to fight under our flag, it becomes prudent not to mix our own people with them to be destroyed;—for, at the critical moment when the boarders were called for, the foreigners all ran below, while not a native American shrank from the conflict." Yet the

name of the poor panic-struck bugleman, "William Brown," does not appear in the agent's "list of British subjects, late belonging to the Chesapeake." As, then, William Brown, unless he had misnamed himself, was certainly not a Portuguese, Dane, or Swede, the inference is pretty clear, that he was a "native American."

Another Boston editor attributes the success of the boarding-assault to "the bugleman's being killed early in the action:" when, a full twelvemonth aftewards, a court-martial, held at New London, "on certain persons, officers on board the U. S. frigate Chesapeake, at the time of her capture by the Shannon," finds—"William Brown, bugleman, guilty of cowardice; and sentences him to receive 300 lashes." (Nav. Chron. vol. xxxiii. p. 70.)

The Chesapeake's crew were remarkably stout, healthy young men; especially when contrasted with the Shannon's; most of whom were rather below the middle stature, and a great proportion old or elderly men. As one proof of stoutness in the Chesapeake's men, the handcuffs that had been placed upon her deck, ready to secure the British crew, as soon as the Shannon was captured, caused, when applied to the wrists of the Americans, many of them to wince with pain.

It requires a stout heart as well as a stout body, to bear the brunt of a boarding-assault.

Men may, as the "Report" says, "behave well at their quarters, and fire on the enemy with great rapidity and precision;" but it is the personal conflict, the glittering broadsword, brandished aloft, that tries a seaman's valor.

The effect this had upon the Chesapeake's crew, is made one of the "causes of complaint" in the said "Report." Thus: "Against the crew generally; that they deserted their quarters, and ran below, after the ships were foul, and the enemy boarded." Mr. Clarke, feeling it to be his province to rebut this serious charge, says:—"Her (the Chesapeake's) commander was but very slightly acquainted with his crew; the greater part of whom were new recruits." "She, as has been already observed, was but an indifferent vessel, and at the moment the Shannon appeared, was not in complete order for an engagement. But Lawrence had himself challenged a British vessel; the sight of one riding in defiance before him, was too much for his pride to bear. He, in consequence, put to sea on the 1st of June, having hoisted a white flag with '*Free trade and sailors' rights.*'—He (Captain Lawrence) addressed his men in a short discourse, but it was received with no marks of approbation. Discontent was apparent among a part of the crew, and complaints were muttered of not having received their prize-money. The boatswain, a Portuguese, was the principal

instigator of this dissatisfaction. Lawrence, unacquainted with his crew, resolved to remove the cause of their complaint. He ordered the purser to give prize-checks to those who had received none." (Nav. Hist. vol. i. p. 205.)

It is evident, that Mr. Clarke attributes Captain Lawrence's "being but very slightly acquainted with his crew," to the greater part of them being "new recruits."—In the American naval service, men enlist for two years, and sign articles, the same as in the merchant-service. We have seen that, in 1811, the Chesapeake recruited for, and no doubt obtained, a complement of 443. The men's terms of service would have about expired in April, 1813, when the Chesapeake arrived from a cruize. An intelligent English gentleman was at that time a resident of Boston; and the nature of his pursuits gave him a full opportunity of witnessing the manning and equipment of the United States' vessels then in port. He declares that the greater part of the Chesapeake's crew, as was very customary in the service, re-entered; that, to fill up her complement, four houses of rendezvous were opened; that the moment a man declared himself a candidate, he received a dollar, and accompanied an officer to the ship; where he was examined as to his knowledge of seamanship, age, muscular strength, &c. by a board of officers, consisting of the master, surgeon, and

others; that, if approved, he signed the articles, and remained where he was; if rejected, returned home with a dollar in his pocket; that frequently, out of five boat-loads of men that would go off to the ship, in the course of the day, *three* would come back, not eligible. So much for Mr. Clarke's "new recruits."—The features of the American war would have borne a very different aspect, could British ships have been manned in a similar way.

During her last cruize the Chesapeake sent in one prize, the Volunteer, "said to be worth 150,000*l.* sterling."—It could, therefore, be only among the men who belonged to her in that fortunate cruize, that "complaints were muttered of not having received their prize-money." And how could Captain Lawrence better "remove the cause of their complaint," than by ordering "the purser to give prize-checks to those who had received none"? All this clearly shews, that the majority of the Chesapeake's crew were the same she had been manned with since 1811; and, from the fastidiousness of her officers in filling up the deficiencies, and the fine appearance of the captured men, it is highly probable that the Chesapeake, under Captain Lawrence, had full as good a crew as she ever sailed with.

Not a word is there in the "Report" about "new recruits;" but the same object is at-

tempted by a statement, that "most of the officers had recently joined the ship, some only a few days preceding the engagement."—Captain Lawrence arrived in the Hornet, from a cruize, on the 29th of March; and Mr. Clarke says he was, "shortly after his arrival at New York, appointed to the Chesapeake." That ship, we have seen, arrived at Boston about a fortnight afterwards; and, therefore, Captain Lawrence must have taken the command of her, within a day or two of that period. He probably brought with him some favorite officers. The Chesapeake's regular first lieutenant, Mr. Page, was left on shore sick; but still she had one lieutenant more than the Shannon; and where was there a braver man, or better officer, than her first lieutenant in the action, Ludlow? He, poor fellow, died a few days after he was brought to Halifax: previous to which it was hoped that his valuable life would be saved.

Has Mr. Clarke the effrontery to call the boatswain a Portuguese?—The Chesapeake's boatswain was brought in, mortally wounded; and his name in the agent's book, is, "Peter Adams." He was boatswain of the Constitution, when she took the Guerriere; and so far from being a "Portuguese," or even a British subject, was a native American.

Mr. Clarke says the Chesapeake "was but an indifferent vessel."—Would his government, had

that been the case, have expended 150,000 dollars, only a few months before she was captured, in thoroughly repairing her?—Captain Evans, in a letter to the secretary of the navy, gave the Chesapeake a very high character; and the capture of the Volunteer, was considered to have wiped off the "unlucky" from her name. Her men, therefore, would naturally be stimulated to make more "prize-money;" and (what glee they must all have been in!) the very object of their wishes, "the finest ship of her rate in the British navy," was beckoning to them to come and take her.

According to Lieutenant Budd's letter, the Chesapeake "proceeded on a cruize, a ship of war in sight, believed to be the British frigate Shannon."—Is Mr. Clarke aware of the responsibility he attaches to Commodore Bainbridge, the naval commanding-officer at Boston, by declaring, that the Chesapeake "was not in complete order for an engagement"?—Fortunately for the commodore, it is too well known that, however different may be the case with British, American ships of war never "proceed on a cruize," in ordinary cases even, till perfectly ready. It is known, also, that their men are drilled at the guns, in harbour as well as at sea: consequently, they cannot be out of practice.

The Shannon was built at Chatham in 1806. Two Shannons had previously been lost. One,

a 32-gun frigate, was built in 1796; and lost by shipwreck, in 1800. The other, of 36 guns, was built in 1803; and, in the same year, struck the ground in a gale, and was wrecked under the batteries of Cape la Hogue. The seamen, in consequence, applied the term "unlucky" to the present Shannon; and she was not manned without the greatest difficulty; and then only, by draughts from other ships. The fact of the Chesapeake, also, having been denominated "an unlucky ship," is a strange coincidence.

The Chesapeake was built in Norfolk, Virginia, in 1797; and cost 220,677 dollars, 80 cents, or 61,299*l.* 8*s.* sterling. The American papers, announcing her launch, highly commended her model, strength, and workmanship.

Dimensions of the two ships.

		Shannon.		Chesapeake.	
		Ft.	In.	Ft.	In.
Length of lower-deck, from rabbit to rabbit,		150	2	151	0
Breadth, extreme,		39	11 3/8	40	11
Depth in hold,		12	11	13	9
Main-deck beams,	broad, or *sided*,	1	0	1	3 1/2
	deep, or *moulded*,	0	11	1	0 1/2
Main-mast,	length,	92	0	93	4
	diameter,	2	3 1/2	2	6
Main-top-mast,	length,	55	2	58	10
	diameter,	1	4 1/2	1	5 3/4
Main-yard,	length,	81	6	84	9
	diameter,	1	7 1/8	1	7 1/2
Main-top-sail-yard,	length,	60	9	63	8
	diameter,	1	0 5/8	1	1 3/4

It appears, therefore, that whatever difference existed between the two ships, in point of size, was in favor of the Chesapeake; yet the Americans would have had us believe, that the Shannon was by far the larger ship. The Shannon is constructed somewhat differently from the Macedonian and her class, in having seven, instead of eight ports of a-side upon the quarter-deck; which occasioned Captain Broke to fit up the two gangways as ports, for the reception of his boat-guns. The Chesapeake has eight ports of a-side upon the quarter-deck, the same as the President; and a much larger forecastle, with an additional port on each side; which gives her, in all, the same number of broadside-ports as the President. This may account for the Chesapeake's having formerly rated of 44 guns.

Previous to her capture, the Chesapeake had undergone a very complete repair: since which she has returned from a long cruize off the Cape of Good Hope; and although, as Mr. Clarke says, "the worst ship in the navy of the United States," is now considered as one of the finest frigates of her class in the navy of Great Britain. Mr. Low, the editor of the "History of the War," was too well versed in figurative language, not to be ready with the very best *antithesis* to his friend's description of the Chesapeake. He therefore calls the Shannon—"the best frigate in the British navy."

Comparative force of the two ships.

		Shannon.	Chesapeake.
Broadside-metal in pounds,	l. guns,	270	270
	carr.	268	320
		— 538	— 590
Complement,	men,	306	384
	boys,	24	7
		— 330	— 391
Size in tons,		1066	1135

Yet, says the "Report,"—"the capture of the U. S. frigate Chesapeake, by the *superior force* of the British frigate Shannon"!—But is not this language quite consistent with that used at the capture of our three frigates? If the Shannon and Chesapeake were admitted, by Americans, to have been equally matched, it would be giving the lie to all their former assertions; and hurling a host of "heroes" from the very pinnacle of fame, down to the level of ordinary men.

It was beneath the dignity of Americans, after having captured so many British vessels of "superior force," to attribute their defeat, in the present instance, to a "superiority of force". Therefore, the Shannon's "superiority" appears rather as a collateral circumstance; while the causes of the Chesapeake's capture are asserted to have been, "the almost unexampled early fall of Captain Lawrence, and all the principal officers; the bugleman's desertion of his quarters, and inability to sound his horn."

That "all the principal officers" fell early, is false. The first lieutenant received the wound that disabled him, while making an effort to repel the boarders; and neither the second, nor third lieutenant, was wounded, till the boarding took place. True, the Chesapeake's commander was mortally wounded. In how many of our naval combats with the Americans, has that happened to us? In using the word "unexampled," perhaps the court confined its view to what generally occurred on board American vessels: then, indeed, no one can dispute the correctness of the expression. The excuse about "the bugleman's desertion of his quarters, and inability to sound his horn," was a proper topic for Mr. Clarke and Mr. Low to expatiate upon, but cuts a very ridiculous figure in the solemn decree of a "court of inquiry."

The court first duly arranges some *ifs*, *probablys*, and *might haves*, and then designates the whole an "almost unexampled concurrence of disastrous circumstances." Were any of the Chesapeake's masts shot away? Did either of our three frigates surrender with their masts standing?—But, says the "Report,"—"if the Chesapeake had not accidentally fallen on board the Shannon, and the Shannon's anchor got foul in the after quarter-port of the Chesapeake, the Shannon must have very soon surrendered or sunk." Falling on board is then a "disastrous

circumstance"? It may be so, in the opinion of Americans; but Britons always consider the event that enables them to grapple and manfully oppose their enemy, as a fortunate, not a "disastrous" circumstance. Nor, had the ships kept clear, would the Shannon "have very soon surrendered or sunk."—It was in practical gunnery, wherein the Shannon's men so greatly excelled the common run of British crews. In bravery, all are alike. Had the Chesapeake hauled up sooner, and kept at long shot, she would also have found her match. Masts might have fallen; encreased slaughter ensued; and the action been protracted to the length of the Java's, still a succession of firing, such as the Shannon's was, must have given her the victory.

Had the two ships been dismasted, the conqueror might have been compelled to leave his trophy behind; nay, his own safety would have been hazarded. The action took place within easy signal-distance of Boston-light-house; and there were lying in Boston, besides the Constitution, several gun-boats, a brig, and some schooner privateers. The wind was fair. Even the Constitution, half rigged as she was, could have come out to the Chesapeake's rescue; and the gun-boats, already in the bay, might, with their long 32s and 24s, (the wind being light,) have considerably injured the Shannon, from the moment she became disabled. Or, suppose that,

during the action, the wind had chopped round, and blown a gale from the seaward; one ship would have been in the very mouth of her own harbour; which, without a stick standing, she might have reached in safety: the other, embayed, and close on board an enemy's coast; upon which she could scarcely avoid being stranded. Even had the gale commenced after possession, the only difference is, that both ships must have shared the same fate.

These were, doubtless, some of the "favorable circumstances," which Mr. Clarke says, in addition to a "superiority of force," attended the Shannon; and the facility with which the Chesapeake could have procured the aid of her friends, was, upon the same principle, among the "particular disadvantages," under which she labored.

In most of our unsuccessful actions, the numerical superiority of the Americans has amounted, by the time the flag was struck, to two, three, four, and, in one instance, *seven* to one; and, in naval actions generally, the conquerors outnumber their prisoners. But, if we take the whole that were alive on each side, the reverse was the fact, when the Chesapeake surrendered to the Shannon; the former having 333, the latter but 307, hands on board, including a large proportion of boys. The truth is, the destructive fire of the Shannon came wholly unexpected. It appalled the majority of the Chesapeake's crew;

caused the men, as the "Report" says, "almost universally to desert their quarters;" and then the sudden appearance of Captain Broke and the boarders, made the Chesapeake an easy conquest.

Although the Chesapeake's first lieutenant, at Halifax, two days before the appearance of unfavourable symptoms, when his wounds were perfectly easy, and he had no apprehension of danger, said, in the presence of several gentlemen:—"When I thought myself supported by at least twenty of the Chesapeake's crew, to resist the Shannon's boarders, I found they had all run below;"—although the "Report" has stated that even a midshipman "left his quarters;" and has charged "the crew generally, that they deserted their quarters;"—yet the court—"cannot perceive, that the national flag has suffered any dishonor from the capture of the U. S. frigate Chesapeake"!

Whatever "superiority of force" existed, was clearly on the side of the Chesapeake. As Britons, that we scorn to estimate; and even the American star and chain-shot, and hogshead of lime, shall not be allowed to disturb the equality and fairness of the action. But Captain Broke did something more than capture a frigate of equal force: he sought and commenced the attack, close to an enemy's port, filled with armed vessels; and then, beat his ship in *eleven*, and captured her in *fifteen* minutes.

CHAPTER X.

Commodore Rodgers's account of his chase off the North Cape—The chasing ships identified as the Alexandria and Spitfire—Beneficial effects of Captain Cathcart's gallantry—Dominica falls in with and engages the Decatur—No British official account of the action—Enemy's details of it—Loss and force of each vessel—Statement of comparative force—Boxer encounters the Enterprize—Details of the action—No British official account—Damage and loss of each vessel—Their relative force, in guns, men, and size—American accounts—Statement of comparative force—Remarks thereon.

THE U. S. frigates President and Congress, left Boston upon a cruize on the 1st of May. The Congress parted company; and the President, towards the latter end of June, put into Bergen, in Norway; whence she departed on the 2d of July. Commodore Rodgers, having gained information, that thirty sail of whalers, under the protection of two brigs of war, would be at Archangel in the middle of July, bent his course for the North Cape, in the hopes of inter-

cepting them. The commodore cruized about, till the 19th of July; when, just as he expected to fall in with the fleet, the President was chased from her cruizing ground by—" a line-of-battle ship and a frigate."—Here are the commodore's own words, extracted from his official letter, dated " Newport, September 27, 1813."

" In this object the enemy had the good fortune to disappoint me, by a line-of-battle ship and a frigate making their appearance off North Cape, on the 19th of July, just as I was in momentary expectation of meeting the enemy's convoy. On first discovering the enemy's two ships of war, not being able, owing to the haziness of the weather, to ascertain their character with precision, I stood towards them, until making out what they were, I hauled by the wind on the opposite tack to avoid them; but, owing to faint, variable winds, calms, and entire daylight, (the sun in that latitude, at that season, appearing at midnight several degrees above the horizon,) they were enabled to continue the chase upwards of 80 hours; during which time, owing to different changes of the wind in their favor, they were brought quite as near as was desirable. At the time of meeting with the enemy's two ships, the privateer Scourge, of New York, which I had fallen in with the day before, was in company; but their attention was so much engrossed by the President, that they per-

mitted the Scourge to escape, without appearing to take any notice of her."

The above "line-of-battle ship and frigate" were no other than the Alexandria, an old fir frigate, of the same armament and size as the Southampton, (see p. 83,) and the Spitfire sloop, (formerly a fire-ship,) armed chiefly with 24-pound carronades.

It may, perhaps, afford some satisfaction to those of the President's officers, who differed in opinion from the commodore, as to the character of the two chasing ships, to see an extract from the Alexandria's log-book, commencing at noon, and ending at midnight, on the 19th of July.

Courses.	Dist.	Lat.	Long.	Bearings, &c. at noon.
S. 65 E.	144	71° 46′	10° 18′ E.	N. Cape S. 72 E. 117 miles
1 3 4			Do. weather. At 2. saw a sail to-windward; observed her to be a frigate, and a large schooner in company.	
2 3	S.E. by E.			
3 3				
4 2				
5 2	S. by E.	Vble.	At 5. 40. wore.	
6 2 4			6. tacked.	
7 4 4				
8 2 4				
9 1 6	W. ½ N.		9. all sail in chase.	
10 1 6				
11 1 6				
12 1 6			12. sloop in company.	

Among the prisoners on board the President, at the time of the chase, were the master and mate of the snow Daphne, of Whitby. According to the Journal of these men, published in

the newspapers, they, as well as many of the President's officers and men, were convinced that the chasing ships were a small frigate and a sloop of war. They describe, in a ludicrous manner, the preparations on board the President, to resist the attack of this formidable squadron. During each of the three days, a treble allowance of grog was served out to the crew; and an immense quantity of star, chain, and other kinds of dismantling shot, got upon deck in readiness for the action. It appears, also, that when the Eliza Swan, whaler, hove in sight, a few days afterwards, she was supposed to be a large ship of war; and the ceremony with the grog and dismantling shot was repeated. After a very cautious approach, the commodore most gladly discovered the chase to be a clump of a merchantman, and made prize of her accordingly.

It was then, indeed, the Alexandria and Spitfire, and not a line-of-battle ship and frigate," that, for 80 hours, chased the U. S. ship President, Commodore Rodgers; and which were, at one time, " quite as near as was desirable"! The promptitude and gallantry of Captain Cathcart, saved a fleet of 30 ships; but, considering that the force of the Alexandria and Spitfire, united, scarcely amounted to half the force of the President, without reckoning the Scourge, with 10 guns, and at least 120 men, it must be pronounced a very fortunate circumstance, that the

glasses on board the President possessed such extraordinary magnifying powers.

On the 5th of August, H. M. schooner Dominica, having under convoy the Princess Charlotte packet, from St. Thomas's, fell in with the privateer-schooner Decatur, off the southern coast of the United States. After a contest of three quarters of an hour, during which the boarders were twice repulsed, the Decatur's "whole crew" succeeded in getting upon the Dominica's deck. Here a desperate struggle ensued, and continued for several minutes: at last, the British crew were overpowered by double their number. No official account has appeared in the Gazette. The following details are extracted from a Charleston paper.

"A third attempt was made by the captain of the Decatur to board. The jib-boom of the Decatur was run into the main-sail of the enemy. The fire from the artillery and musketry was terrible, and well supported on both sides. The Dominica, not being able to disengage herself, dropped along-side; and it was in this position that Captain Diron ordered his whole crew to board, armed with pistols, sabres, &c. which order was executed with the promptness of lightning. Mr. Vincent Safith, first prize-master, and quarter-master T. Wasborn, were the two first on board the enemy: in doing which the prize-

master received three wounds. The crew of the enemy fought with as much courage and bravery, as that of the Decatur did, with valor and intrepidity. Fire-arms now became useless, and the crews were fighting hand to hand with cutlasses, and throwing cold shot; when, the captain of the enemy and the principal officers being killed, the deck covered with dead and wounded, the English colours were hauled down by the conquerors. In consequence of the orders given by the captain of the Decatur, the vessels were then separated; the rigging and sails being in the worst state possible.

"During the combat, which lasted an hour, the king's packet, Princess Charlotte, remained a silent spectator of the scene; and, as soon as the vessels were disengaged from each other, she tacked, and stood to the southward.

"Killed and wounded on board the Decatur: killed 3; wounded 16; one of whom (the carpenter) since dead. On board the Dominica: killed 13; wounded 47; of whom 5 are since dead of their wounds: total, killed and wounded, 60. Among the killed are, G. W. Barretté, commander; Mr. I. Sacker, master; Mr. D. Brown, purser; Mr. Archer and Mr. Parrey, midshipmen. Wounded, Mr. I. Nichols, midshipman. The surgeon and one midshipman were the only officers on board who were not killed or wounded. The lieutenant was left on shore sick.

"From the above statement," says the Charleston editor, "it would appear, that this engagement has been the most bloody, and the loss in killed and wounded on the part of the enemy, in proportion to the number engaged, perhaps the greatest, of any action to be found in the records of naval warfare. The surviving officers of the Dominica attribute the loss of their vessel to the superior skill of the Decatur's crew in the use of musketry, and the masterly manœuvering of that vessel, by which their carriage-guns were rendered nearly useless. Captain Barretté was a young man of not more than twenty five years of age. He had been wounded early in the action by two musket-balls in the left arm; but he fought till the last moment, refusing to surrender his vessel, although he was urged by the few survivors of his crew to do so; declaring his determination not to survive her loss. One of the lieutenants of the Decatur received a severe sabre-wound in the hand from Captain Barretté, a few moments before he fell. Captain Diron is a Frenchman, and most of the officers and crew of his vessel are his countrymen. They have done themselves immortal honour by the humanity and attention displayed towards their prisoners after the victory; which is spoken of in high terms of approbation, by the surviving officers of the enemy's vessel."

"The crew of the Dominica, with the excep-

tion of eight or ten boys, were fine-looking young men; but, to see them in the mangled state in which they arrived, was enough to freeze the blood of one not accustomed to such sights, with horror. Among her crew is a small boy, not eleven years old, who was twice wounded, while contending for victory upon her deck." ——Poor child! it would have suited thee better to be throwing *dumps* than "cold shot,"—to be gamboling in the nursery, than "contending for victory" upon a ship's deck.

The armament of the Dominica was, by the American account, twelve carronades, 12-pounders, two long 6-pounders, and a 32-pound carronade on a pivot; total 15 guns; together with a brass swivel. Her crew consisted of 67 men, and 10 boys. The Charleston paper gives 83 as her complement; but the sentence of the court-martial expressly states, that "there remained only 15 of the Dominica's crew that were not either killed or wounded"; which number, with the unwounded purser and midshipman, and the enemy's amount of killed and wounded, makes 77.

The Decatur mounted, according to the Charleston paper, six carronades, 12-pounders, and one long 18-pounder, on a pivot; "with 103 men." The sentence of the court-martial, relying upon the evidence adduced, declares she had on board "140 men." The Americans are

in the habit of excluding the *officers*, when computing the complements of their own vessels. Admitting the same plan to have been adopted in this case, the different prize-masters and other officers of the Decatur, might easily amount to 37. But, to be below, rather than above the estimate, the mean of the two numbers will be taken. Boys are seldom admitted on board privateers; and in this vessel, in particular, the crew consisted chiefly of desperate characters, who had been enured to their business, on board French West-India pickaroons. Two boys will be an ample allowance.

Both these schooners were captured by British cruizers, before the war terminated; and the Dominica was again taken into the service. The size of each vessel, therefore, is accurately obtained.

Comparative force of the two schooners.

		Dominica.		Decatur.	
Broadside-metal in pounds,	long guns,	6		18	
	carronades,	104		36	
			110		54
Complement,	men,	67		120	
	boys,	10		2	
			77		122
Size in tons,			217		232

Here, in weight of metal, the British vessel was doubly superior; but the Decatur's long 18-pounder had caused considerable destruction, before the Dominica's shot could reach; and,

subsequently, the latter's guns were rendered nearly useless, by the privateer's excellent manœuvres. Boarding immediately followed. Against such odds every human effort was unavailable: still the enemy, with difficulty, cut his way through the little band, to the colours lashed in the schooner's rigging.

The gallantry evinced on this occasion elicited praises from the enemy; but that enemy was a *Frenchman*. So careful is the *American* naval historian not to indulge in this weakness, that he has substituted,—"The resistance of the English was desperate," for all the commendatory expressions used in the French details. Mr. Clarke has also left out of his account, that the Dominica had boys in her crew, as well as that Captain Diron and most of his crew were Frenchmen. Indeed, so fearful is the editor, lest his readers should discover the first-published account to have been a translation, that he has substituted "cannon" for "artillery," and made other alterations, to place it beyond a doubt, that an American commander and crew effected the Dominica's capture.

But the editor of the "Sketches of the War" has proved himself the most able historian of any. He calls the action of the Dominica and Decatur—"a brilliant attack made by a privateer upon a—*large sloop of war*"!—"No event," says he, (p. 203,) "probably, in the naval annals,

furnishes evidence of a more brilliant and decisive victory, gained by a vessel, so inferior in size, strength, and armament, to her antagonist."

Captain Diron, to flatter the vanity of the Americans, and suit his own convenience, named his vessel the Decatur, and commissioned her at the port of Charleston. It is for the latter reason only, that the action appears in these pages.

On the morning of the 5th of September, while H. M. brig Boxer, was lying at anchor near Penguin Point, a few miles to the eastward of Portland, in the United States, the American brig Enterprise made her appearance. Captain Blyth immediately got under weigh to engage her; leaving his surgeon, two midshipmen, and an army-officer, a passenger, on shore at a place called Manhegan, "shooting pigeons."

The action commenced about a quarter past 3 P. M. and in the very first broadside, an 18-pounder shot passed through Captain Blyth's body, and shattered his left arm. The same broadside killed a marine and a seaman; and wounded several others of the Boxer's crew. Almost immediately after the loss of her gallant commander, the Boxer's main-top-mast was shot away. This enabled the Enterprise to take a

raking position, and to maintain it till the contest ended. No British official account of this action has been published.

The Boxer was much cut up in hull and spars; and lost, besides her commander, 3 men killed, and 17 men wounded, 4 of them mortally; total killed and wounded 21.

The Enterprise suffered but little injury in her hull and spars. Her rigging and sails were a good deal cut. She lost 1 man killed, her commander, a midshipman, and 11 men wounded, the 2 first, and 1 man, mortally; total killed and wounded 14. The American official letter describes no "slightly wounded." They may have amounted to a few more.

The Boxer arrived on the North American station, with the usual armament of her class; but her commander obtained, at Halifax, two additional carronades; making her force, in the action, twelve carronades, 18-pounders, and two long 6-pounders. Gun-brigs are not allowed boat-carronades; consequently, fourteen were all the guns the Boxer mounted. The American official account gives her no more; but Mr. Clarke, depending more upon "Niles' Weekly Register," quotes from that:—"His Majesty's *fine brig of war* Boxer, of 18 guns;" and again says:—"Boxer, guns mounted 18."

The Boxer had, on leaving St. John, N. Brunswick, a few days before the action, 71 men, 6

boys, and a passenger; total 78. Of these, 8 seamen were absent in a prize; and the passenger, surgeon, and 2 midshipmen, as stated before, on shore at Manhegan; leaving a residue of 60 men, and 6 boys.

The prisoners received from the Boxer, according to the American papers, amounted, including the mortally wounded, to 62; making, with the 4 killed in the action, 66. To put this beyond a doubt, some American gentlemen sought for the party that had been left at Manhegan. An Eastern paper gives the following as the substance of their information:—"They (the party on shore) gave precisely the same account of the force of the Boxer as the other officers, and without communication with them. The crew of the Boxer, at the time of the engagement, according to their statement, consisted only of 66."

The "Particulars of the action," furnished a newspaper-editor by one of the Enterprise's officers, stated that, out of "115 *picked men*," the Boxer had, "when the action commenced, 104." The official letter declared, that she had "between 20 and 25 killed." (App. No. 45.) Captain Hull, next, wrote Commodore Bainbridge, that he, having "counted upwards of 90 hammocks," (two are generally allowed for each man,) had no doubt she "had 100 men on board;" but found it "impossible to get at

the number killed." To convince the bulk of the Americans, that the Boxer had but 66 men and boys, was therefore a vain task. The few moderate men who attempted it, were scouted as traitors or *tories;* and even Mr. Clarke, the historian, takes the safe side. Although he would not acknowledge Lieutenant M^c^Call's letter, as any authority for the number of guns mounted by the Boxer, he considers it unquestionable, as to the number of her killed.

The Enterprise mounted fourteen carronades, 18-pounders, and two long 9-pounders. One American journal, besides giving that as her force, states the guns, complement, and tonnage of the Boxer, with the utmost correctness. The complement of the Enterprise cannot be fixed with the same certainty as her guns. The commander of the British schooner Fly, captured by the Enterprise about the 26th of August, and carried into Portsmouth, N. Hampshire, says the latter sailed from that port in quest of the Boxer, Captain Burrows having received intelligence of her being on the coast, with part of her crew absent; that she (the Enterprise) then added several volunteers to her original complement, which consisted of 113 men, and 3 boys. Some American papers stated the Enterprise's complement as high as 125; others as low as 102. The latter probably meant, exclusive of officers. The U. S. brig Viper, of only 12 guns,

had 93 men; Nautilus, of 14 guns, 106 men; Vixen, of the same force, 130 men; Rattlesnake and Syren, of 16 guns each, 131 and 137 men. The two last-named brigs had each 2 lieutenants, besides her commander; and so had the Enterprise. To avoid over-rating the latter's complement, let it be fixed at, including volunteers, 120 men, and 3 boys.

The Enterprise was originally a schooner; and her full dimensions, in hull, spars, and sails, as a schooner, appear in the M.S. memorandum-book, before referred to. (See p. 111.) Soon after the late war commenced, the Enterprise was cut in two, lengthened, (so as to have one more port of a-side,) and altered to a brig, at Washington. The Nautilus, captured by the Shannon, was also originally a schooner; and was altered to a brig without being lengthened. By adding, therefore, to the Enterprise's original length, the distance between the fore-side of one of the Nautilus's ports, to the aft side of the next port, which is 8 feet 6 inches, we have the present length of the Enterprise. This makes her 245 tons; but several British officers who have seen the Enterprise, state that she is about 260 tons. The Nautilus's top-sides are nearly as stout as those of our first-class brigs: while the Boxer had only one timber between each port; which made her top-sides pervious to every grape-shot that was fired. The spars of the

Enterprise will be considered as no larger, than those which the Nautilus had, when captured.

Dimensions of the two brigs.

	Boxer. Ft.	In.	Enterprise. Ft.	In.
Length on deck, from rabbit to rabbit,	84	4	97	1
Breadth, extreme,	22	1¼	23	8
Main-mast, { length,	53	4	62	0
Main-mast, { diameter,	1	5½	1	10½
Main-yard, { length,	39	9	50	0
Main-yard, { diameter,	0	9⅛	0	10½

This is the proper place to give an extract from the American "Particulars:"—"At 3 P.M. tacked, and bore up for the enemy, taking him to be one of his majesty's brigs of the *largest size*"!

None of the praises lavished upon the "*fine brig of war* Boxer," could gain her a place among the national vessels of the United States. She was put up to auction, and sold as a merchant-brig; for which service only, (and that in peaceable times,) she was ever calculated.

Comparative force of the two brigs.

		Boxer.		Enterprise.	
Broadside-metal in pounds,	{ l. guns,	6		9	
	{ carr.	108		126	
			114		135
Complement,	{ men,	60		120	
	{ boys,	6		3	
			66		123
Size in tons,		179		245	

The superiority in weight of metal is trifling; that in number of men, *two-fold*. Gun-brigs are allowed but one lieutenant, one master's-mate, and two midshipmen. The absence of the two midshipmen, the shameful defection of the acting master's-mate, and three seamen, (App. No. 46.) and the fall of her brave commander by the first broadside, rendered the Boxer's situation, at the very onset of the engagement, peculiarly unfortunate. On the other hand, the Enterprise, after her commander was wounded, had still two lieutenants, and four or five midshipmen, left, to carry on the action. These circumstances considered, the disparity between the two crews, was even greater than the numerical difference, already so great.

None but a novice in American history, will be surprised at the following paragraph in Mr. Low's book:—"The President of the United States, having considered the Boxer as equal in force to the Enterprise, has ordered her to be delivered up for the benefit of the captors."